

THE INTERSPIRITUALITY OF  
MOTHER TERESA AND KI AGENG SURYOMENTARAM:  
A DIALECTICAL STUDY OF MYSTICAL CONTEMPLATION AND  
TRANSFORMATIVE SERVICE

A Dissertation  
presented to  
the Faculty of  
Claremont School of Theology

In Partial Fulfilment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
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has been presented to and accepted by  
the Faculty of the Claremont School of Theology  
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## ABSTRACT

The Interspirituality of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram:

A Dialectical Study of Mystical Contemplation and Transformative Service

by

Stefanus Christian Haryono

The primary focus of this research is the intersection of two mystical figures with different religious and cultural backgrounds: Mother Teresa, a Christian and Albanian-Indian, and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, a *Kejawen* and Javanese-Indonesian. This research is grounded in Wayne Teasdale's notion of interspirituality as the interdependence of spiritual traditions and interconnectedness of the self and reality through self-transcendence. Self-transcendence, as the core of interspirituality, promotes a dialectical approach of mystical contemplation and transformative service to pursue the value of humanity, such as Mother Teresa's mystical way of *charity is love* and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's mystical way of *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge). The interpretation of this research is focused on their lived experiences using the method of hermeneutic phenomenology. To analyze the self-transcendence of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, Bernard Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence through the three-fold conversion (intellectual, moral, and religious) as the radical transformation to achieve authenticity is employed. Interspirituality offers a new theological understanding of spirituality which is not focused on a doctrinal concept, but turns to self-transcendence as subjective presence to foster peaceful coexistence, and becomes a complimentary approach for interreligious dialogue in Indonesia as a pluralistic country.

*Keywords:* Mother Teresa, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, spirituality, interspirituality, Wayne Teasdale, self-transcendence, conversion, Bernard Lonergan, Indonesia, pluralistic country

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To write a dissertation on Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in light of interspirituality had been my dream for years prior to coming to CST. On this journey, the *knowing of the unknown* has inspired me with a new theological notion using Bernard Lonergan as the lens of analysis. Now my dream has become real. I am thankful for my dissertation committee: Prof. Frank Rogers Jr., Ph.D. as advisor/chair; Prof. Michael J. McGrath, Ph.D. (of the Episcopal Theological School, Claremont); and Prof. Koentjoro Soeparno, Ph.D. (of the Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia). I am also grateful for the Thesis Secretaries: Debbie Ahlberg, Ph.D. and Tom Phillips, Ph.D. Another "Thank you" goes to the Writing Center (Kirianna Florez, Rob McDonald, Pam Nourse and Stephanie Rice) and an outside proof reader, Amy Montevaldo.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Problem

Indonesia is a diverse country with a population of 250 million people spread over 17,000 islands. There are more than 700 ethnic groups speaking 600 languages and practicing six official religions: Islam, non-Catholic Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. Islam is the majority religion and Indonesia has the largest population of Muslims in the world. In addition to the six official religions, there are also indigenous beliefs. After many years of petitioning, on November 7, 2017, the Supreme Court of Indonesia placed indigenous beliefs on equal footing with the official religions, and granted legality to indigenous practices. Indigenous beliefs are categorized in one group as *Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the Almighty One). For Indonesians to live peacefully is a complex challenge due to a latent problem called *suku, agama, ras, dan antar golongan* (SARA), meaning “ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group,” which has developed across the archipelago of Indonesia.

There have been endeavors to resolve this latent problem. Before the independence of Indonesia on August 17, 1945, the Second Youth Congress built up the spirit of unity in diversity through the *Sumpah Pemuda* (The Youth Pledge), which declared the oneness of Indonesia, on October 28, 1928. After Independence Day, to reinforce the oneness, Indonesia took the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). One of the most sensitive and crucial aspects of SARA is *agama* (religion). Since the 1970s Indonesians have created interreligious dialogue through the four forms of interreligious dialogue: the dialogue of theological exchange, the dialogue of life, the dialogue of action, and the dialogue of religious experience.

In the last two decades, intolerance has worsened due to the increase of the radical Islamic movement under *Wahhabism*. The movement opposes other religions, even other Islamic groups who have different doctrines; indigenous beliefs; the cultural heritage of Indonesian ethnic groups; minority groups, such as those who identify as LGBT; and the democratic system of Indonesia, going so far as wanting to change the country's democratic system to a *Khilafah* (Caliphate) system. The radical Islamic movement stands upon its supremacy as the majority religion and uses this position to oppress others. Moreover, this radicalism or fundamentalism constructs a dichotomy between *pure* religious life and the value of humanity. Thus, intolerance and violence are no longer just a problem for interreligious relationships, but are now threatening the sustainability of Indonesia as a people and a nation with natural diversity.

This highlights how the four forms of interreligious dialogue are inadequate. To nurture *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as the essence of Indonesia, Indonesians need a new approach to compliment interreligious dialogue. I suggest interspirituality. Interspirituality elevates the value of the self as the basis of intersection across human diversity, in which each person builds a collective consciousness with both others and the cosmos.

## Thesis

Interspirituality is an approach for living in a pluralistic world through the sharing of the total being and reality of the self as *subject*, with the capacity of self-transcendence through conscious intentionality—i.e. being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and in love—as mystical consciousness *in* ordinary life. Interspirituality goes beyond mutual understanding of doctrinal truth and social networking in interreligious dialogue due to the fulfilment of the authenticity of the self in personal and communal contexts. This intersection

of the authenticity of the self, as seen in Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram through their mystical contemplation and transformative service, brings new insight for contextual interspirituality in Indonesia as a pluralistic country.

## Research Method

The research method used in this dissertation is hermeneutic phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on “lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the ‘texts’ of life (hermeneutics)” through reflecting on essential themes.<sup>1</sup> The hermeneutic approach toward a lived experience recognizes that human existence “is embedded in a world of meaning” which not only needs to be described, but also has to be interpreted.<sup>2</sup> This study determines the essence of the lived experiences of two mystics, Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, by interpreting their mystical lives through the lens of Bernard Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence. Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence emphasizes “a phenomenological and hermeneutical account of human intentionality” in the dynamic of intentional consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding.<sup>3</sup> The interpretation focuses on a dialectical approach between mystical contemplation and transformative service by arguing that the mystical way is an essential part of social engagement instead of separate from it. I will explore Mother Teresa’s life through her

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1. John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2013), 79.

2. Linda Dale Bloomberg and Marie Volpe, *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A Road Map From Beginning to End* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2016), 48.

3. Brian J. Braman, *Meaning and Authenticity: Bernard Lonergan and Charles Taylor on the Drama of Authentic Human Existence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 60.

journal, personal interpretations by friends and church leaders, and secondary works by scholars after Mother Teresa's death. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, I will use his concept of *Kawruh Jiwa*, as recorded by his son and followers, and academic texts by psychologists and anthropologists. The primary texts of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, written in the Javanese language, itself influenced by Sanskrit and Arabic, require double translation and interpretation into Indonesian, followed by English. Because of the limitations of one language to interpret another, I will include the Javanese texts in order to not lose the original meaning. For the resources in Indonesian, I will generally translate into English, though for a few of them I will include the original text. This dissertation will be the first work to explore the intersection of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, as well as one of the first to use the lens of self-transcendence. This work will illuminate a new theological understanding of spirituality that is not focused on an outward, doctrinal concept, but turns the search for spirituality inward, finding a universal core for humanity.

### Scope and Limitation

This study will focus on the intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram within Bernard Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence. In exploring these two mystics I will confine the study to interspirituality (invented by Wayne Teasdale), and through it I will propose its contribution for Indonesia. In ecumenical and interreligious contexts, this study will assist people who are concerned within contextual spirituality by taking into account the indigenous beliefs of Indonesia. This theological analysis of the intersection of the two mystics through Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence will provide a new insight into interspirituality as a complement to the four common forms of interreligious dialogue in Indonesia. However, this dissertation will be

somewhat limited in scope as it will focus on building a theory of interspirituality rather than the creation of models for praxis.

### Originality of the Contribution and Its Importance

This dissertation constructs the following original contributions in the field of spirituality: first, there are a number of studies and publications on Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram separately, but none on the intersection of their mystical lives. Moreover, studies and publications on Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are mostly in the field of psychology while there are very few studies in the area of theology. This shows a major deficit in contextual spirituality studies since the Javanese mysticism of *Kejawen* has been ignored by Javanese theologians. This dissertation will give Indonesian theologians a new context which will include indigenous beliefs, rather than relying to excess on Western perspectives of spirituality.

Second, there is a common misunderstanding of spirituality: it is often identified as a spirit divorced from the other aspects of a human being, such as mind, body, experiences, etc. This study rests on the alternative meaning of spirituality as the *capacity for self-transcendence* of a holistic being, uniting the “spirit” with the other aspects. To enrich this study I will employ Bernard Lonergan’s notion of *self-transcendence as the authenticity of being* through intentional consciousness for *being in love with God*. I will propose authentic spirituality as a means of transcendence for the holistic human being, first in personal spirituality which, in turn, leads to communal spirituality. There is an intersection between Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence and the capacity of self-transcendence as the core of spirituality. I will create this model of spirituality through the lens of self-transcendence at the intersection of lived experiences between Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram.

Third, the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, which are rooted in different traditions and contexts, show that both individuals were provoked by social awareness of suffering, social hierarchy, and otherness. This study highlights the work of mysticism by questioning and changing social structures for humanity across all boundaries of life. This redefines mysticism and spirituality as being present and engaged in the world, not retreating from it. The mystical lives of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram demonstrate self-transcendence as the spiritual core of humanity. In this study, mysticism is understood as developing an inner self-consciousness and development of transformative action that embraces the reality of life and does not withdraw from society. The inner self-consciousness of “I thirst” and “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, respectively, led them to respect the humanity of others as part of themselves. Spirituality is about the reality of life wherein mysticism is an act of social justice. Mysticism is a connection between the mystical soul and social engagement, and is about responsibility and resistance *with* love.

Fourth, in the field of spirituality, many studies on spiritual figures relate to these figures’ own traditions. These studies often construct a wider theory of spirituality across ages and formulate theories into practices through spiritual formation, repackaging spiritual practices for wider consumption in the twenty-first century, often for the Western world. This study offers a new approach in the sub-field of spirituality called *interspirituality*, as first proposed by Wayne Teasdale. I will use interspirituality for an inquiry on the intersection of the mystical lives of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Interspirituality will be viewed as a complement to interreligious dialogue, which is more than a repackaging of spiritual practice. Interspirituality transforms the individual subjectivity of humans into the basic universal core of personhood as the basis for genuine dialogue with others beyond their



beliefs. Self-transcendence is the core of interspirituality which relies on the self as *subject*, instead of on a doctrinal basis, for building communion with others.

The motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) affirms that Indonesia is *home* for all within its diversity. An eloquent interspiritual approach to the plurality of Indonesia is needed, and this dissertation will offer an important contribution to the existence of humanity, which is naturally pluralistic.

## CHAPTER 1

### The Context of Interreligious Dialogue in Indonesia

#### Introduction

“Living side by side with people from all religious traditions, religious people should now be in an ideal position to learn from one another about their diverse religions and to lay aside as unworthy the idea that any one of the currently available religions is final and normative for all human beings.

Sadly, however, as shown in the return over the last 30 years of particularistic, fundamentalistic, and extremist forms of religion as powerful and often disruptive forces in the global public square, antipluralist religious views seem to be prevailing over liberal, progressive, and pluralist views, a change of mood that is reflected in the dominant inclusivism in recent theologies of religions.”<sup>4</sup>

- Kenneth Rose

This chapter presents an overview of the context of interreligious dialogue in Indonesia and its struggle to identify as a pluralistic country, triggered by the increase of fundamentalism and extremism in the last two decades. As Kenneth Rose said above, fundamentalists and extremists promote anti-pluralism and carry out acts of violence toward humanity. These have been occurring across the archipelago. Certain groups practice terrorism not only against those with different religious beliefs, but also against Indonesian culture, seeking to change it into an Arabic culture. In short, they strongly promote intolerance in many ways, even in Yogyakarta, a center of Javanese culture, which has the motto “City of Tolerance.”<sup>5</sup>

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4. Kenneth Rose, *Pluralism: The Future of Religion* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013), 46.

5. Herry Zudianto, “Yogyakarta: Management of Multiculturalism” (paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of UCLG ASPAC, Hamamatsu, Japan, October 20, 2010). Herry Zudianto was Mayor of Yogyakarta city.

Living peacefully in a pluralistic country is a challenge due to the power of the majority over the minority in all aspects of life: ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group. I will describe the struggle between the majority and minority groups among the official religions, as well as between the official religions and indigenous beliefs. It is ironic that the indigenous beliefs, as the “local beliefs,” were discriminated against by the official religions as the “new comers.” However, interreligious dialogue endeavors through the four types of interreligious dialogue (the dialogue of theological exchange, the dialogue of life, the dialogue of action, and the dialogue of religious experience) have been undertaken, but it is an inadequate solution for harmonious living. This chapter will examine the complexity of interreligious dialogue in Indonesia for interspirituality as a new complimentary approach for a pluralistic country. Based on these interreligious challenges in Indonesia, I will build up this dissertation.

## The Relationships Between the Majority and Minority Groups

### ***Interrelation and Conflict of Official Religions***

Indonesia is a diverse country, with a population of 250 million spread over 17,000 islands. There are more than 700 ethnic groups speaking 600 languages and practicing six official religions: Islam as the majority religion with the largest percentage of Muslims in the world, followed by non-Catholic Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. There are also many indigenous beliefs which are categorized as *Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the Almighty One). Living peacefully for Indonesians is a complex challenge because the latent problem relates to the conflict of *suku, agama, ras, dan antar golongan* (SARA), meaning “ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group.” SARA has appeared through the natural existence of diversity itself, and was

worsened by the Dutch strategy of *divide et impera*, meaning “breaking up a larger power into pieces” during 350 years of colonial rule.

The conflict of SARA does not occur within a single facet of life, such as only ethnicity or only religion. Many times, conflicts occur in multiple aspects and rapidly spread across cities, even across islands. Moreover, the conflict of SARA became a “giant monster” when politicians became the “invisible hands” and created a chaotic situation, such as in May 1998 when Soeharto’s regime collapsed. During that time, the chaos dominated not only in the capital city of Jakarta, but across cities: with the burning down of houses, stores, malls, and religious places; raping women of Chinese descent; shooting demonstrating college students, etc. These show how the conflict of SARA is a latent problem in Indonesia as a pluralistic country. The diversity of Indonesia is a treasure, but presents a challenge for nation building.

In Batavia (now the capital city Jakarta) on October 28, 1928, the Second Youth Congress developed the spirit of unity in diversity by declaring The Youth Pledge: First, one mother-land is Indonesia. Second, one nation is the nation of Indonesia. Third, one language of unity, Indonesian. This happened seventeen years before Indonesia gained independence on August 17, 1945. Then, to reinforce the oneness, Indonesia took the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, meaning “Unity in Diversity.”

Within an intercultural context, regional and ethnic interest groups were the primary reason for the formation of various rebellious organizations, such as the Republic of the South Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan or RMS) which was formed in 1950, the Free Papua Organization (Organisasi Papua Merdeka or OPM) which was formed in 1969, the Free Aceh Movement which was formed in 1976, etc. Other conflicts happened in the 80s and 90s, such as violence which occurred between local Dayak, an ethnic group of Kalimantan (Borneo), and immigrants of the island of Madura in 1997, and several riots

attacking groups of the ethnic Chinese descendants in Java in the years 1980, 1996, and 1998.<sup>6</sup> These acts of violence were triggered by prejudice toward other ethnic groups.

Within the interreligious context, there are plenty of examples of group conflicts which spread across the country, such as how “in the five years between 1992 and 1997, 145 churches were destroyed in violent conflicts. Between 1996 and 1998 there were particularly serious conflicts in Situbondo, Tasikmalaya, Solo, and Jakarta (Java).”<sup>7</sup> After the fall of the New Order or Soeharto Regime in 1998, there were a series of conflicts. Jan S. Aritonang notes,

[I]n Poso (Central Sulawesi) from 1998 to 2002, in Maluku [Halmahera and Ambon] from 1999 to 2004, in West and Central Kalimantan from 2000 to 2001, the bombings of Christian churches in several cities on Christmas Eve of 2000, and the bomb blast in Bali on October 12, 2002, caused much damage to Muslim-Christian ties.<sup>8</sup>

Noorhaidi Hasan adds that, “in the eyes of *Jamaah Islamiyah*’s leader [Abu Bakar Baasyir<sup>9</sup>], these communal conflicts [in Poso and Maluku] had opened the door to jihad.”<sup>10</sup> These show

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6. Leo Suryadinata, “Ethnic Groups and the Indonesian Nation-State: With Special Reference to Ethnic Chinese,” in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (London: Routledge, 2018), 44-5. See also, Chris Wilson, “Ethnic, Religious, and Regional Conflict” in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, 118-28.

7. Carl Sterkens and Handi Hadiwitanto, “From Social to Religious Conflict in Ambon. An Analysis of the Origins of Religiously Inspired Violence,” in *Religion, Civil Society and Conflict in Indonesia*, eds. Carl Sterkens, Muhammad Machasin, and Frans Wijzen (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009), 60.

8. Jan S. Aritonang, “Christians in Indonesia” in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (London: Routledge, 2018), 260.

9. Abu Bakar Baasyir has been imprisoned, off and on, since 1983. From 2002 to present, he has been imprisoned due to several acts of terrorism. He is also the founder of Pondok Pesantren (Islamic boarding school) *Al-Mu'min* in Ngruki Village, Solo, Central Java.

10. Noorhaidi Hasan, “Salafism in Indonesia: Transnational Islam, Violent Activism, and Cultural Resistance” in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (London: Routledge, 2018), 250. Hasan adds that *Jamaah Islamiyah* is linked to *al-Qaeda*.

not only the power of the radical Islamic groups across the islands of Indonesia, but also the inability of interreligious dialogue to build a peaceful pluralistic society. Religious life metamorphosed into a monster, such as the bombing of Oikoumene church<sup>11</sup> in Samarinda, Kalimantan in which Intan Olivia Marbun, a two and half year old girl, was killed on November 13, 2016.<sup>12</sup> Bombings of churches have occurred for many years, in addition to more recent tragedies: a sword attack at Sunday Mass at St. Lidwina Catholic church in Yogyakarta on February 11, 2018,<sup>13</sup> and several bombs placed at Catholic, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian churches in Surabaya on May 13, 2018.<sup>14</sup> These tragedies show the increase of intolerance and violence in Indonesia, and several scholarly studies on the subject point to two main sources: the Majelis Ulama Indonesia's (MUI, Indonesian Council of Ulama) *fatwa* (decree) against pluralism, liberalism, and secularism, and the increase of the radical Islamic movement.

The controversial *fatwa* of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI)

July 28, 2005 was a bad day for the attempt to build Indonesia as a pluralistic country and a *peaceful home* for all Indonesians, under the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, meaning "Unity in Diversity." On that day, MUI issued a *fatwa* or decree against pluralism, liberalism,

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11. Oikoumene church is a Protestant denomination.

12. Herianto Batubara, "#RIPIntan, Kenangan Manis Intan Olivia, dan Jeritan Rindu Keluarga," *detikNews*, November 15, 2016, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3345692/ripintan-kenangan-manis-intan-olivia-dan-jerit-rindu-keluarga>.

13. Riani Sanusi Putri and Juli Hantoro, "Begini Detik-detik Penyerangan Gereja St. Lidwina, Sleman," *TEMPO.CO*, February 11, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1059556/begini-detik-detik-penyerangan-gereja-st-lidwina-sleman/full&view=ok>.

14. Caesar Akbar and Amirullah, "Ledakan Bom di Surabaya Terjadi di Tiga Gereja," *TEMPO.CO*, May 13, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1088304/ledakan-bom-di-surabaya-terjadi-di-tiga-gereja/full&view=ok>.

and secularism.<sup>15</sup> The *fatwa* stressed two basic points: first, only Islam holds the truth from God; and second, all followers of other religions will not enter and live together in heaven. Of course, the *fatwa* is given to Muslims and not others, but the *fatwa* itself strongly impacts the relationships among the six official religions and indigenous beliefs in Indonesia. It seems that MUI only focuses on Islamic doctrine, ignoring the context of Indonesia where the *fatwa* was issued. Since that day, some Islamic and other religious leaders have been criticized because the *fatwa* demonstrates the majority supremacy of Islam over minority religious groups, and thus erodes tolerance for others. Muhammad Machasin argues that Islamic fundamentalism stands behind the *fatwa* by “judging secularism, pluralism and liberalism (pejoratively [called] SIPILIS by fundamentalists, an acronym alluding to the venereal disease, syphilis) to be un-Islamic.”<sup>16</sup> Islamic fundamentalists reject secularism, pluralism, and liberalism because these come from Western thoughts which reflect on un-Islamic perspective. Meanwhile, Moch Nur Ichwan notes in his research that several criticisms came from liberal-progressive Islamic scholars who are active within *Jaringan Islam Liberal* (JIL, the Liberal Islam Network):<sup>17</sup>

Azyumardi Azra criticized the fact that they [the MUI ulama] had taken the Qur'an and *hadith* literally, without applying reason to their interpretations ... Syafii Anwar, meanwhile, asserted that the MUI's fatwa was a serious violation of religious freedom. Ulil Abshar-Abdalla said that it reflected the 'stupidity' (*tolol*) of the MUI ulama ... Dawam Rahardjo even said that in

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15. Majelis Ulama Indonesia, *The fatwa of MUI tentang Pluralisme, Liberalisme dan Sekularisme Agama* (Keputusan The fatwa of MUI Nomor 7/Munas VII/MUI/11/2005), the decree issued in Jakarta, July 28, 2005, <https://melatipandanwangi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/fatwa-mui-tentang-pluralisme-liberalisme-dan-sekularisme-agama.pdf>. This is the fatwa no. 7/2015 by the Indonesian Council of Ulama.

16. Muhammad Machasin, “The Islamic Fundamentalist Movement and its Impact on Pluralism in Indonesia,” in *Religion, Civil Society and Conflict in Indonesia*, eds. Carl Sterkens, Muhammad Machasin, and Frans Wijzen (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009), 36.

17. *Jaringan Islam Liberal* (JIL, the Liberal Islam Network) was established in 2001.

issuing an unreasonable fatwa the MUI had in fact itself committed blasphemy.<sup>18</sup>

These criticisms highlight how, in the context of a pluralistic country, the *fatwa* is an inappropriate statement, claiming that only one religion has the whole truth and then bringing this claim into the public space. Religion is not only a belief system, but also a social system. This means a religion cannot be seen only on a doctrinal basis.

The *fatwa* does not offer a solution to the latent problem in the conflict of SARA, but rather intentionally increases it. Moreover, being against pluralism is the same as denying the reality of Indonesia as a multicultural and multireligious country. Franz Magnis-Suseno, a Jesuit and humanist, stresses,

Indonesia has already lived such a pluralism for centuries. It has always not only comprised an immense variety of cultures and religions, but has also been able to cope with diversity ... Islam itself pervaded Indonesia by and large peacefully, which also becomes apparent from the tremendously diverse manner in which it has penetrated cultures.<sup>19</sup>

In other words, Magnis-Suseno highlights that pluralism as a willingness to accept others is an essential way of life for Indonesians, who emphasize a harmonious and communal life. Another Christian scholar, Johannes B. Banawiratma, responds that the *fatwa* leads to a risky problem for interreligious relations in Indonesia, because there is not only a state power but also a “religious power” in the public domain.<sup>20</sup> MUI as a religious organization has equal

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18. Moch Nur Ichwan, “Towards a Puritanical Moderate Islam: The Majelis Ulama Indonesia and the Politics of Religious Orthodoxy,” in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the “Conservative Turn,”* ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Publishing, 2013), 82-3. Ulil Abshar-Abdalla was a former JIL coordinator.

19. Franz Magnis-Suseno, “Pluralism under Debate: Indonesian Perspectives,” in *Christianity in Indonesia: Perspectives of Power*, ed. Susanne Schröter (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010), 353.

20. Johannes B. Banawiratma, “Power and Interreligious Relations: An Example from Indonesia,” in *Religion, Civil Society and Conflict in Indonesia*, ed. Carl Sterkens, Muhammad Machasin, and Frans Wijzen, (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2009), 99.



status with other religious organizations, such as Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (PGI, Council of Churches in Indonesia), Konferensi Waligereja Indonesia (KWI, Bishops' Conference of Indonesia), Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI, Indonesia Hinduism Society), etc. In fact, MUI has power as the single majority religious group.<sup>21</sup>

MUI was established in 1975, in the New Order era of Soeharto, as *khadim al-hukumah* (servant of the government), but after the fall of Soeharto's regime in 1998, MUI changed its orientation to be *khadimah al-ummah* (servant of *ummah* or the community). This shift in orientation led to a changing role in post-New Order Indonesia as well. MUI plays a role in

the certification of *halal* foods and Islamic banking services to the “purification” of public morality (action against pornography and “porno-action”), education (the polemic on Draft Law on the National Education System), the image of Islam (*jihad* and terrorism), Islamic thought (religious pluralism, liberalism and secularism), and Islamic faith (deviant belief and the Ahmadiyah movement).<sup>22</sup>

In other words, MUI is attempting “to force their perspectives to be public policy and government,” even though MUI does not have a voice in constitutional law.<sup>23</sup> Ichwan argues that the shift in orientation occurred because “the MUI's world-view is no longer characterized by moderate Islam *per se*, but rather by ‘puritanical moderate Islam.’”<sup>24</sup> The peak of MUI's metamorphosis occurred at its 2005 National Conference in which

members of such Islamist movements as the HTI [Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia] and Front Umat Islam (FUI) [as radical organizations] were recruited to occupy certain positions in the central MUI and in some provincial and district offices, depending on the representative local politics inside and

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21. Muslims make up 85% of the population.

22. Ichwan, “Towards a Puritanical Moderate Islam,” 61.

23. Zainal A. Bagir, “Demokrasi Pluralism and Agama Konservatif,” in *Costly Tolerance: Tantangan Baru Dialog Muslim-Kristen di Indonesia dan Belanda*, ed. Suhadi (Yogyakarta: Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies UGM., 2018), 159.

24. Ichwan, “Towards a Puritanical Moderate Islam,” 61.

outside the MUI ... A few intellectuals considered as 'liberal' [who] had been members of the MUI's central board up to 2005, although they were never involved in decision-making.<sup>25</sup>

These studies affirm that the *fatwa* was inspired by the radical Islamists who recently formed the board of MUI. At this point, radical Islam is not only a movement, but has also become a decision maker, through MUI as the religious institution of Islam, to force government.

Thus, the *fatwa* has a broader implication than protecting Muslims in Indonesia. The *fatwa* has the potential to create disintegration in Indonesia as a pluralistic county. All Indonesians, whatever ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group they belong to, are treasures for nation-building instead of destroying the nation.

#### Radical Islamic Movement

The radical Islamic movement evolved rapidly in the time since the fall of Soeharto's regime in 1998, which heralded an era of reformation. This radicalism emerged in a variety of cell-groups, but they all fall under the umbrella of *Salafism*. Hasan says that *Salafism* has three main concerns:

[First], the purity and oneness of God, meaning to accept and believe in the oneness of God and his absolute authority, considered the foundation of Muslim life ... [Second], the call for a return to strict religious practice as well as the moral integrity of individuals ... [Third], Muslim society must first be Islamized through a gradual evolutionary process that includes education (*tarbiyya*) and purification (*tasfiyya*) before the comprehensive implementation of the shariah can be realized.<sup>26</sup>

*Salafism* reconstructs a form of *Wahhabism*, which is concerned with "matters of creed and morality, including strict monotheism, divine attributes, purification of Islam from accretions,

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25. Ichwan, "Towards a Puritanical Moderate Islam," 64.

26. Hasan, "Salafism in Indonesia," 247.

anti-Sufism, and development of the moral integrity of the individual.”<sup>27</sup> The Salafis or Wahhabis claim that they are *the* only people who hold *the* truth, and it is in Islam, based on their own interpretation of the Qur’an and *hadith*. They then force *the* truth to be the norm of social life.

Because of this strict perspective, those with worldviews differing from *Salafism* or *Wahhabism* are enemies and therefore may be killed, as has happened to other Islamic traditions and other religions. For example, the horrible violence toward Islamic groups who are considered to be outside Islam, e.g. the *Ahmadiyah*, in Cikeusik, Banten (West Java) on February 6, 2011, and the *Shi’a* on Madura Island in 2011 and 2012.<sup>28</sup> In 1999, *Laskar Mujahidin* and *Laskar Jihad* (Jihad fighters) dispatched “more than 7,000 fighters to confront Christians in Maluku [and Halmahera].”<sup>29</sup> The fighters came from many cities, outside the city of Ambon and the conflict spread throughout Ambon Island and then the entire Maluku province with “[t]he number of fatalities in Maluku as a whole in 1999-2000 ... estimated at between 3,000 and 4,000.”<sup>30</sup> Carl Sterkens and Handi Hadiwitanto add that the number of refugees and persons “displaced by the conflict is set at between 123,000 and 370,000.”<sup>31</sup> The fighters were under the command of Abu Bakar Baasyir, the founder and the leader of *Jamaah Islamiyah*, who delivered a speech in which

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27. Hasan, “Salafism in Indonesia,” 247.

28. Wilson, “Ethnic, Religious” 126. See, Mustofa Bisri et al., “Kronologi Penyerangan Warga Syiah di Sampang,” *TEMPO.CO*, August 27, 2011, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/425697/kronologi-penyerangan-warga-syiah-di-sampang>. Regarding the Cikeusik tragedy on February 6, 2011, see also, Wasi’ul Ulum, “Kronologi Penyerangan Jamaah Ahmadiyah di Cikeusik,” *TEMPO.CO*, February 6, 2011, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/311441/kronologi-penyerangan-jamaah-ahmadiyah-di-cikeusik>.

29. Hasan, “Salafism in Indonesia,” 249.

30. Sterkens and Handi Hadiwitanto, “From Social to Religious Conflict,” 60.

31. Sterkens and Handi Hadiwitanto, “From Social to Religious Conflict,” 60.

he accused Christians of having massacred thousands of Muslims in the Moluccas [or Maluku] and other trouble spots in Indonesia. He called on Muslims in these islands to wage jihad till the last drop of blood, and added that jihad in the Moluccas would only be a training run for the real jihad against *taghut*, tyrannies oppressing Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

Because of the affiliation of *Jamaah Islamiyah* with al-Qaeda, Baasyir's command is in line with one of al-Qaeda's basic doctrines, as James W. Jones quotes from Bruce Hoffman's book *Inside Terrorism*:

Allah commanded us to strike the *Kuffar* (unbelievers), kill them, and fight them by any means necessary to achieve the goal. The servants of Allah who perform jihad to elevate the word (laws) of Allah, are permitted to use any and all means necessary to strike the active unbeliever combatants for the purpose of killing them, snatch their soul from their body, cleanse the earth from their abomination, and lift their trial and persecution of the servants of Allah. The goal must be pursued even if the means to accomplish it affect both the intended active fighters and unintended passive ones such women, children. ... This permissibility extends to situations in which Muslims may get killed if they happen to be with or near the intended enemy. ... Although spilling Muslim blood is a grave offense, it is not only permissible but it is mandated in order to prevent more serious adversity from happening, stalling or abandoning jihad.<sup>33</sup>

This doctrine stresses the blending of devotion to God and violence, and violence takes a position as a sacred purpose in the sense of a *holy war*. The fundamentalists, radicals, and extremists claim that they exclusively possess absolute truth. They promote prejudice and aggressiveness, instead of building communication openly and respectfully with others who hold traditions different from their own tradition.

The increasing of the radical Islamic movement cannot be separated from global *Wahhabism*. In the last two decades, *Wahhabism* has gradually changed the image of Islam in Indonesia from that of friendly to hostile Muslim. Martin van Bruinessen argues that the

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32. Hasan Noorhaidi, "The Radical Muslim Discourse on Jihad, and the Hatred against Christians," in *Christianity in Indonesia: Perspectives of Power*, ed. Susanne Schröter (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010), 340.

33. James W. Jones, *Blood that Cries Out from the Earth: The Psychology of Religious Terrorism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 64-5. Emphasis added.

“high visibility of Indonesian Arabs holding leading positions in radical movements seemed to point to their role as middlemen in a process of Arabization of Indonesian Islam.”<sup>34</sup> The radical movements attempt to reduce the influence of the two majority Islamic non-governmental organizations of Indonesia: *Muhammadiyah*, which was founded in 1921, and *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU), founded in 1926. *Muhammadiyah* and NU differ in their theological basis: defending orthodoxy through understanding scripture literally and contextualizing scripture into Indonesian cultures, respectively.

In August 2015, the 33<sup>rd</sup> *Muktamar* NU (NU Conference) in Jombang, East Java, affirmed that *Islam Nusantara* is the prototype of NU as a contextualization of Islamic teaching in Indonesian culture. *Islam Nusantara* encourages *nahdliyin* (NU members) to become “‘agent[s]’ of Islam *rahmatan lil alamin* in Indonesia and worldwide.”<sup>35</sup> By being *Islam rahmatan lil alamin*, NU works actively for the internationally peaceful and tolerant enterprises, based on the principles of NU: “*tasawut* (moderate), *tawazun* (equality), *adalah* (justice), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *musyarokah* (unity).”<sup>36</sup> For NU, these principles are the dialectical way for engaging with cultures in society. Surely, with the radical Islamic movement against NU, as Syafiq Hasyim states,

Radical Islamic groups, such as Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defenders Front) and Islamic movements based on *Salafism-Wahhabism* accuse *Islam Nusantara* of being an effort by NU to separate Islam from Arabic tradition.

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34. Martin van Bruinessen, “Introduction: Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam and the ‘Conservative Turn’ of the Early Twenty-First Century,” in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the “Conservative Turn,”* ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Publishing, 2013), 5.

35. Dawam Multazam, “Islam Nusantara, Dari NU untuk Dunia,” *Suara Nahdatul Ulama*, July 7, 2015, <http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/60706/islam-nusantara-dari-nu-untuk-dunia>.

36. Multazam, “Islam Nusantara.”

FPI, through Rizieq Shihab's statement,<sup>37</sup> for example, satirizes and even more humiliates *Islam Nusantara* as ANUS (Aliran Nusantara).<sup>38</sup>

The acronym ANUS, even in Indonesian terms, refers to the anatomic orifice of the same name.

NU constructs the prototype of *Islam Nusantara* based on multiculturalism instead of monoculturalism. Multiculturalism is not imported from outside Indonesia, but rather is the identity of Indonesia as a society. From the beginning, Islam in Indonesia has grown alongside people who are "multi-" in ethnicity, religion, and local wisdom. Hasyim argues, "Indeed, we [NU] appreciate the dialogue Islam has with local traditions where Islam itself developed, but the local aspect of Arab cannot be applied to the local aspect of Indonesia."<sup>39</sup> In other words, *Islam Nusantara* proposes a different viewpoint on multiculturalism from the *fatwa*, which suspects that pluralism and multiculturalism are a Western product. In contrast, NU affirms that multiculturalism is the essence of Indonesia as a nation. Members of NU who gather into a grassroots society called Gusdurian<sup>40</sup> actively build dialogue, networking, and caring with other religions. Gusdurian, along with the police, guard religious celebrations

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37. Rizieq Shihab is the leader of FPI. FPI as a radical Islamic group was established in August 1998, three months after the fall of Soeharto's regime. Noorhaidi states that FPI was "associated with a number of military and civilian personalities who were not ashamed to mobilize *preman* (gang members or thugs) and other violence-prone groups in order to pursue their political interests ... This group incorporated young men calling themselves Salafis." See Noorhaidi, "Radical Muslim Discourse on Jihad," 323.

38. Syafiq Hasyim, *Islam Nusantara Dalam Konteks: Dari Multikulturalisme Hingga Radikalisme* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Gading, 2018), 11. Emphasis added.

39. Hasyim, *Islam Nusantara*, 31. The second part of this quotation, I translated literally because I do not want to lose the Indonesian meaning.

40. Gusdurian was established by the family of Gus Dur in 2010 through the Bani Abdurrahman Wahid Foundation. This foundation is open to everyone who lives by Gus Dur Values, such as multiculturalism, interfaith dialogue, democracy, tolerance, and peace. Gus Dur or Abdurrahman Wahid was the chairman of NU from 1984 to 2001, the 4<sup>th</sup> President of the Republic of Indonesia (1999-2001), and grandson of Hasjim Asjari, the founder of NU. See the official website of Gusdurian: <http://www.gusdurian.net/id/about-gusdurian>.

of other faiths, and build *silaturahmi* (visiting with empathy) with the churches attacked by terrorists.<sup>41</sup> These are NU's way of tolerance.

*Muhammadiyah* "always had an ambivalent attitude" toward the current intolerance issues in the midst of conservatism and progressive tension of Islam in Indonesia.<sup>42</sup> Among *Muhammadiyah* itself, there is an ambivalent attitude between conservatism and progressivism, as shown by the fact that "Muhammadiyah members followed the PKS" (PKS, the *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* or the Prosperous and Justice Party), affiliated with *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI) and *Wahhabism*.<sup>43</sup> Ahmad Najib Burhani describes how there is a remarkable change occurring within *Muktamar Muhammadiyah* (Muhammadiyah Conference). From the 44<sup>th</sup> meeting in 2000 to the 45<sup>th</sup> in 2005 there was a shift in leadership from progressive scholar Ahmad Syafii Maarif to conservative scholar Din Syamsuddin.<sup>44</sup> Ahmad Najib Burhani mentions that for some foreign researchers, "Syamsuddin was regarded as fundamentalist Muslim, an apostle of conservative Islam, and the 'brain' behind militant Islam."<sup>45</sup> Meanwhile, Syamsuddin has a good reputation among members of *Muhammadiyah*, nationally and internationally.

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41. Patricia Vicka, "Gurdurian Gelar Doa Bersama di Gereja St. Lidwina," *MetroTvNews.com*, February 14, 2018, <http://jateng.metrotvnews.com/peristiwa/Dkq39aZN-gusdurian-gelar-doa-bersama-di-gereja-st-lidwina>. See also, Aqwamit Torik, "Gelar Doa Lintas Iman di GKI Diponegoro, Gusdurian: Ini Upaya Menangkal Perpecahan Antar Agama," *TribunJatim.com*, May 19, 2018, <http://jatim.tribunnews.com/2018/05/19/gelar-doa-lintas-iman-di-gki-diponegoro-gusdurian-ini-upaya-menangkal-perpecahan-antar-agama>.

42. van Bruinessen, "Introduction," 8.

43. van Bruinessen, "Introduction," 3, 9.

44. Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Liberal and Conservative Discourses in the Muhammadiyah: the Struggle for the Face of Reformist Islam in Indonesia," in *Contemporary Developments in Indonesian Islam: Explaining the "Conservative Turn,"* ed. Martin van Bruinessen (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Publishing, 2013), 109-15.

45. Burhani, "Liberal and Conservative Discourses," 114.

At three churches in Surabaya on May 13, 2018, Maarif, as the former chairman of *Muhammadiyah*, publicly condemned terrorism and said the terrorists were “extremely ill-behaved.”<sup>46</sup> Also, Maarif acted as a peacemaker by visiting both St. Lidwina Catholic Church in Yogyakarta after a sword attack<sup>47</sup> and the attacker in hospital.<sup>48</sup> In his dialogue with the attacker, Maarif encouraged him to turn to the way of Islam *rahmatan lil alamin*<sup>49</sup> as a religion which promotes grace and peace toward others. With regard to the current issue of intimidation and terror by radical Islamic individuals toward the *sedekah laut* (the offering to the sea) cultural ceremony at Bantul, Yogyakarta on October 13, 2018, Maarif encouraged society to not be afraid to stand against the radical Islamic movement, and made a strong public statement that *Wahhabism* is very dangerous for the cultural heritage of Indonesia.<sup>50</sup> For *Wahhabism*, Indonesian culture makes Islam impure. In the midst of *Muhammadiyah* turning to the realm of conservatism, Maarif is one of the progressive scholars who is concerned by and committed to standing against acts of intolerance and violence.

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46. Pribadi Wicaksono and Widiarsi Agustina, “Mengapa Buya Safii Sebut Bom Surabaya Superbiadab?,” *TEMPO.CO*, May 14, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1088564/mengapa-buya-syafii-sebut-bom-di-surabaya-superbiadab>.

47. Purnomo Edi, “Datangi Gereja Santa Lidwina, Buya Safi’i Minta Kasus Penyerangan Diusut Tuntas,” *merdeka.com*, February 11, 2018, accessed November 2, 2018, <https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/datangi-gereja-santa-ludwina-buya-syafii-minta-kasus-penyerangan-diusut-tuntas.html>.

48. Danar Widiyanto, “Begini Cerita Buya Saat Bertemu Suliono,” *KRJOGJA.com*, February 19, 2018, [http://krjogja.com/web/news/read/58336/Begini\\_Cerita\\_Buya\\_Saat\\_Bertemu\\_Suliono](http://krjogja.com/web/news/read/58336/Begini_Cerita_Buya_Saat_Bertemu_Suliono).

49. One of NU leader, Hasyim Muzadi proposes a comprehensive description of Islam *rahmatan lil alamin*. See Muhammad Makmun Rasyid, “Islam Rahmatan Lil Alamin Perspektif KH. Hasyim Muzadi,” *Epistémé* 11 (2016): 93-116, accessed November 2, 2018, doi: 10.21274/epis.2016.11.1.93-116.

50. Muh. Syaifullah and Juli Hantoro, “Soal Teror Sedekah Laut: Buya Syafii: Jangan Takut Pada Mereka,” *TEMPO.CO*, October 15, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1136567/soal-teror-sedekah-laut-buya-syafii-jangan-takut-sama-mereka>.



*Muhammadiyah* has changed its policies on political life through the endorsement of building an alliance with *Partai Amanat Nasional* (PAN, National Mandate Party) and PKS, which is affiliated with *Wahhabism*.<sup>51</sup> PAN was founded by Amin Rais, a former chairman of *Muhammadiyah* (1995-2000), and members of the *Muhammadiyah* organization. Hasyim argues that the alliance between *Muhammadiyah*, PAN, and PKS is geared towards building the power of *identity politics* for the majority, Islam. Rais often states publicly that “the minority group has fewer human rights than the majority group.”<sup>52</sup> Rais’ perspective is in line with the radical Islamic movement which has played a role in the political process, including the 2017 Jakarta election: Rais was involved in a series of demonstrations against the most popular gubernatorial candidate, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok), who is a double minority as a Christian of Chinese descent. Habib Rizieq Shihab, the leader of FPI, led a series of demonstrations accusing Ahok of blasphemy.<sup>53</sup> Because of this, Ahok is now in prison. This is similar to an incident in North Sumatera in 2016: a Buddhist woman of Chinese descent, Meliana,<sup>54</sup> was accused of blasphemy after complaining that the mosque’s speaker was too loud. Because of her complaint both a Vihara and a Confucian Temple were burned by a radical Islamic group, who then dragged Meliana to prison.<sup>55</sup>

*Wahhabism* promotes authoritarianism and Arabic symbolism through the leadership of a *Habib*, who is claimed as a descendent of the prophet, instead of spreading Islam

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51. Burhani, “Liberal and Conservative Discourses,” 121-2.

52. Hasyim, *Islam Nusantara*, 24.

53. Suryadinata, “Ethnic Groups,” 51; Wilson, “Ethnic, Religious,” 126; Hasyim, *Islam Nusantara*, 30.

54. Most proper name for Indonesians have just one name.

55. Lil Askar Monza and Ninis Chairunnisa, “Ini Kronologi Kasus Penistaan Agama Meliana di Tanjung Balai,” *TEMPO.CO*, August 23, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1119663/ini-kronologi-kasus-penistaan-agama-meiliana-di-tanjung-balai/full&view=ok>.

*rahmatan lil alamin* in daily life. Under the label of *Habib*, the leader of *Wahhabism* mobilizes people, including young people. A recent survey by the Alvara Research Center shows that part of the millennial generation, born between the 1980s to 1990s, chose a *Khilafah* (Caliphate) system instead of a democratic one for Indonesia.<sup>56</sup> In line with the Alvara Research Center, in November 2018 the *Badan Intelijen Negara Republik Indonesia* (BIN, Indonesian State Intelligence Agency) issued a press release stating that 39% of students from seven state universities in fifteen provinces agree with radicalism.<sup>57</sup> This research indicates how *Wahhabism* has influenced the younger generation of Islamic Indonesia.

On July 10, 2017, based on the ruling of Perppu Nomor 2 Tahun 2017 about *Organisasi Kemasyarakatan* (non-government organizations), the Indonesian government announced that Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) is an illegal organization in Indonesia, for the following reasons.<sup>58</sup> Firstly, HTI does not positively contribute to building the nation of Indonesia. Secondly, HTI goes against *Pancasila* (the Five Principles) as the philosophical foundation of Indonesia and UUD 1945 (the Constitution of the Republic Indonesia of 1945); HTI wants to change democracy into a *Khilafah*. Thirdly, HTI tends to cause conflicts in society and threatens *Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia* (NKRI, the Unitary State of the

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56. Dhlo Falz, "Survei Alvara: Sebagian Milenial Setuju Khilafah," *CNN Indonesia*, March 7, 2018, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20180307191320-20-281228/survei-alvara-sebagian-milenial-setuju-khilafah>.

57. Iswahyudi, "BIN: 7 PTN Terpapar Paham Radikalisme," *20detik.com*, November 20, 2018, <https://20.detik.com/detikflash/20181120-181120061/bin--7-ptn-terpapar-paham-radikalisme->.

58. Caesar Akbar and Endri Kurniawati, "PTUN: Surat Keputusan Pembubaran HTI Tidak Cacat Yuridis," *TEMPO.CO*, May 7, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1086605/ptun-surat-keputusan-pembubaran-hti-tidak-cacat-yuridis/full&view=ok>.

Republic Indonesia).<sup>59</sup> HTI as an organization had been dissolved, but as an “ism” has spread throughout society. The most recent research by *Dirjen Politik dan Pemerintahan Umum Kementrian Dalam Negeri* (Directorate General of Politics and Public Administration) found 19.4% of civil servants disagree with *Pancasila* as the ideology of Indonesia.<sup>60</sup> This shows how *Wahhabism* has influenced those who work for the Indonesian government. Rejection of *Pancasila* as the ideology of Indonesia is a fundamental problem for national defense because *Pancasila* is one of the four pillars of Indonesia. The three others are: UUD 1945 (the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia), NKRI (the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia), and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). Also, the BIN’s recent research shows that forty-one of the one hundred mosques in government offices were impacted by radicalism.<sup>61</sup> Thus, the radical Islamic movement is not a religious matter, specific to Islam, but rather a national matter for Indonesia as a home for all Indonesians. Both the *fatwa* of MUI and the radical Islamic movement worsen the latent problem relating to the conflict of *suku, agama, ras dan antar golongan* (SARA, ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group). However, intolerance is not only aimed at the six official religions, but also at indigenous beliefs.

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59. Fathiyah Wardah, “PTUN Sahkan Pembubaran HTI,” *voaindonesia.com*, May 7, 2018, <https://www.voaindonesia.com/a/ptun-sahkan-pembubaran-hti/4383078.html>.

60. Ashri Fathan, “Survei Kemendagri: 19,4% PNS Tak Setuju Pancasila,” *20detik.com*, November 17, 2018, <https://20.detik.com/detikflash/20181117-181117033/survei-kemendagri-194-pns-tak-setuju-pancasila>.

61. Matius Alfons, “BIN: 41 Masjid di Kementrian-Lembaga BUMN-Terpapar Paham Radikal,” *detikNews*, November 17, 2018, <https://news.detik.com/berita/4306260/bin-41-masjid-di-kementerian-lembaga-bumn-terpapar-paham-radikal>.

### ***Conflict Between Official Religions and Indigenous Beliefs***

Indonesia as a pluralistic country has a variety of indigenous beliefs, inherent in the social lives of ethnic groups. These indigenous beliefs developed from particular ethnic groups, places, times, myths, philosophies of life, etc. Some of these beliefs are *Kaharingan* (the water of life) of the Dayak ethnic group in Kalimantan,<sup>62</sup> *Sunda Wiwitan* (the origin of Sunda) of the Sunda ethnic group in West Java,<sup>63</sup> and *Kebatinan* (the science of inner self) as one group of Javanese mysticism in Java and beyond.<sup>64</sup> These indigenous beliefs existed before the official religions came to Indonesia, and some of them syncretized with the official religions, especially Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. During the colonial era and even following the independence of Indonesia on August 17, 1945, the indigenous beliefs were looked upon with suspicion in their own land. Post-independence, on one hand, the indigenous beliefs appeared like “mushrooms in the rainy season,” and, on the other hand, these beliefs were marginalized by the official religions and by the law.

The main issue in the relationship between indigenous beliefs and the official religions is the tension between purism and syncretism in religious life. Rahmat Subagya describes the struggle for the existence of *kebatinan* as one form of *kejawen* or Javanese mysticism, based on the polarization of foreign and native aspects in religious life which led to tension, especially within the relationship between Islam and *kebatinan*.<sup>65</sup> Several

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62. Aubrey Belford, “Borneo Tribe Practices Its Own Kind of Hinduism,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 2011, <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/26/world/asia/borneo-tribe-practices-its-own-kind-of-hinduism.html>.

63. Oscar Ferry, “Sunda Wiwitan Tersingkir dari Tanah Sendiri,” *CNN Indonesia*, August 24, 2017, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20170823191041-20-236802/sunda-wiwitan-tersingkir-dari-tanah-sendiri>.

64. Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Illinois: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960). Geertz did six years for his research project on Javanese mysticism.

65. Rahmat Subagya, *Kepercayaan—Kebatinan Kerohanian Kejiwaan—dan Agama* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1976), 24.

congresses of *Kebatinan* were held on the topic of “the relationship between religion and *kebatinan*, but misunderstanding endured.”<sup>66</sup> The most crucial issue is that people are easily prejudiced, often seeing a correlation between the practice of *klenik* (a black magical practice) and some indigenous beliefs, including *kebatinan*.<sup>67</sup> Even in 1957, at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of *Kebatinan*—the *Badan Kongres Kebatinan seluruh Indonesia* (BKKI, Organizing Body for the Convention of *Kebatinan* throughout Indonesia)—the first President of Indonesia, Soekarno, gave a warning about “the danger of *klenik* or ‘black magical’ expressions of mysticism.”<sup>68</sup> This warning indicates that society generalizes that mysticism and indigenous beliefs are identical with black magic, even now. Meanwhile, the Congress stated that “*kebatinan* was not ‘black magic,’ but supernatural power and ‘white magic.’”<sup>69</sup> This negative stigma provoked the official religions against mysticism and indigenous beliefs.

In social life among Muslims, there are two groups: *santri*, the “[f]aithfully practicing Muslim; originally, and also, a student of a *pondok pesantren* [Islamic boarding school],” and *abangan*, “a Javanese, nominally an adherent of one of the ‘official’ religions, mostly Islam, in whose thinking and religious practices old Javanese, animistic, Hindu and /or Buddhist elements co-exist or predominate.”<sup>70</sup> The relationship between *santri* and *abangan* became worse once it was dragged into the political arena. The crucial tension between *santri* and *abangan* occurred in 1948 when the *santri* supported the military against Indonesian

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66. Subagya, *Kepercayaan*, 70.

67. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 62-3.

68. Niels Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life in Contemporary Java: Cultural Persistence and Change* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1978), 5.

69. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 5.

70. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 123, 125. See Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, 121-30.

communists under *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (PKI, the Communist Party of Indonesia) as a forbidden party. At that time, in parts of society there was a simplistic assumption that “if you are not *santri*, then you are *abangan*; the *santri* are opposed to the *abangan* who identified with communism, including *kebatinan*.”<sup>71</sup> This shows how a religious power easily uses political situations against the way of the *abangan* regarding beliefs about God. The Javanese *abangan* believes that “God is not an unapproachable distant judge; on the contrary, ‘God’ is closer to [a human being] than anything else, because [a human being] is fundamentally part of the Divine Essence.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, the *abangan* has a different path for believing in God, which is a more intimate relationship with the Ultimate Reality in daily life. Despite this, they do not practice a normative piety like the common practices of other religions, such as Islam and Christianity.

In 1952, Islam as the single majority religion forced the Indonesian government, through *Kementrian Agama* (the Ministry of Religious Affairs), to define religion as having three elements: “a prophet, a holy book, and international recognition.”<sup>73</sup> This definition was rejected by the Balinese Hindus. To organize the indigenous beliefs, the Ministry of Religious Affairs established the *Pengawasan Aliran Kepercayaan Masyarakat* (PAKEM, Supervision of the Belief Movements in Society) in 1953. The meaning of the Indonesian word “*pengawasan*” is “watchful” instead of “supervision.” This indicates how indigenous beliefs are “dangerous,” and through PAKEM, the government is able to monitor them. Niels Mulder argues that the “definition would exclude mysticism as a valid religious expression

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71. Samsul Maarif, *Pasang Surut Rekognisi Agama Leluhur dalam Politik Agama di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies, 2017), 25. See also, Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 6. The actual statement is “Selain santri adalah ‘lawan’ yang semuanya dimasukkan dalam golongan abangan, dan diidentikkan dengan komunis, termasuk kebatinan.” I chose to paraphrase on behalf of my English readers.

72. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 11.

73. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 4.

and even outlaw its practice because to the mystic, ‘God’ reveals himself directly in the heart of [human beings] and not through intermediaries such as prophets or holy books.”<sup>74</sup> In 1961, the Ministry of Religious Affairs proposed another definition of religion, stating that it should be characterized by “a holy scripture, a prophet, the absolute lordship of *Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (God), and a system of law for its followers.”<sup>75</sup> This definition was followed by a mandate by the minister for the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Syaifuddin Zuchri, in 1967. He said, “Our country strictly required citizens to have religion and God.”<sup>76</sup> Then, in 1968, the next minister of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, K.H.M. Dahlan, affirmed at the House of Representatives that “[t]he only realization of *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* is having religion.”<sup>77</sup> The affirmations of these two ministers acknowledged that godhead cannot be contemplated outside religion. Moreover, the ministers put godhead in the box of religion, one even smaller than the box of the six official religions.

Over the years this definition became the basis for purifying religion from indigenous beliefs, leading to the People’s Consultative Assembly of Indonesia ruling on the status of indigenous beliefs through TAP MPR RI Nomor VII/MPR/2001, namely that *Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*, or indigenous beliefs, are part of the social culture instead of being a belief system, or religion.<sup>78</sup> In other words, indigenous beliefs were marginalized by the official religions and the law, because the indigenous beliefs do not fulfil the definition of religion. This ruling caused many problems for people who are not followers of one of the

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74. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 4.

75. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 6.

76. Subagya, *Kepercayaan*, 71.

77. Subagya, *Kepercayaan*, 71. Emphasis added.

78. Maarif, *Pasang Surut Rekognisi Agama Leluhur*, 63. Maarif provides a comprehensive chronology of the tension of ruling on indigenous beliefs, 24-63.

six official religions, such as on ID cards (Indonesian ID cards have a column for religion); official weddings, in which the religious wedding ritual must be held in one of the six official religions before the marriage is legalized; as well as other issues which I do not have space to describe in the present text. Meanwhile, the controversy continued with other layers of laws which marginalized the existence of indigenous beliefs. In responding to the controversy, followers of indigenous beliefs, scholars, and others sent a petition of reconsideration of the existence of indigenous beliefs to the Supreme Court of Indonesia.

On November 7, 2017, the Supreme Court of Indonesia made a declaration on the status of indigenous beliefs as being on equal footing with the six official religions.<sup>79</sup> The ruling shows progress toward religious freedom, after many years of presenting the petition to the Supreme Court. In contrast, the Court of Kuningan expelled *Sunda Wiwitan* from their land in Cigugur, Kuningan, West Java on August 24, 2017.<sup>80</sup> This shows that the application of the Supreme Court ruling regarding the equal status of indigenous beliefs with the six official religions still needs time to be accepted in the everyday life of society.

### Yogyakarta, “City of Tolerance”: A Paradox

Yogyakarta is a special province on Java Island with several features. First, the governor is the king of Kraton (Palace) Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono, and the vice governor is Sri Paduka Paku Alam, a leader of Kadipaten Puro Pakualaman. *Daerah*

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79. Kristian Erdianto, “Hak Penganut Kepercayaan Setara Dengan Pemeluk 6 Agama,” *KOMPAS.com*, November 7, 2017, <http://nasional.kompas.com/read/2017/11/07/11495511/mk-hak-penganut-kepercayaan-setara-dengan-pemeluk-6-agama>.

80. Bimo Wiwoho, “Sunda Wiwitan: Agama Tak Diakui, Tanah Dieksekusi,” *CNN Indonesia*, August 28, 2017, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20170828081047-20-237703/sunda-wiwitan-agama-tak-diakui-tanah-dieksekusi>.



*Istimewa Yogyakarta* (DIY, Yogyakarta Special Region) does not have a provincial election, as both Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono and Sri Paduka Paku Alam automatically become the governor and vice governor of Yogyakarta. Second, Kraton Yogyakarta was established in 1755, earlier than the independence of Indonesia in 1945. Kraton Yogyakarta was the first monarchy to declare itself part of *Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia* (NKRI, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia) on September 5, 1945. Third, in addition to Kraton Surakarta in Central Java, Kraton Yogyakarta is a center of Javanese culture. Fourth, the city of Yogyakarta is an educational center with hundreds of colleges and universities, and every year thousands of new students from across the Indonesian archipelago, as well as international students, go there to study. Fifth, Yogyakarta is the only one place in the world which has a transgender *pondok pesantren* “*Al-Fatah*.” Sixth, the city of Yogyakarta is highly diverse, like a “mini Indonesia,” and has the motto “City of Tolerance.” Seventh, the cost of living in Yogyakarta is cheaper than other cities. In short, Yogyakarta is a harmonious city for peaceful living, as shown in the previous motto “Yogyakarta Berhati Nyaman,” which means “Yogyakarta has a Comfortable Heart.”<sup>81</sup>

But in the last several years, “City of Tolerance” as the motto of Yogyakarta has become a paradox. The WAHID Institute, a research center with the adage “Seeding Plural and Peaceful Islam,” founded by the fourth President of Indonesia, Abdurrahman Wahid, reported in its 2014 annual report that Yogyakarta placed 2<sup>nd</sup> on the list of intolerant cities.<sup>82</sup>

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81. Luqman Awwali, “Yogyakarta Berhati Nyaman yang Telah Luntur,” *kompasiana.com*, November 9, 2015, <https://www.kompasiana.com/luqmanawwali/56400882a5afbd7a0698649f/yogyakarta-berhati-nyaman-yang-telah-luntur>. The motto “Yogyakarta Berhati Nyaman” promotes that Yogyakarta is a peaceful city for living.

82. M. Subhi Azhari et.al, *Laporan Tahunan Kebebasan Beragama/Berkeyakinan dan Intoleransi 2014 “Utang” Warisan Pemerintah Baru* (Jakarta: The WAHID Institute, 2014), <http://www.wahidinstitute.org/wi-id/images/upload/dokumen/laporan%20kbb%202014%20-%20the%20wahid%20institute.pdf>.

This analysis was echoed in 2017 by the SETARA Institute, a research institute for democracy and peace, concerned with monitoring religious violence and violations of religious freedom, which reported that Yogyakarta was 6<sup>th</sup> out of 10 on their most intolerant cities index.<sup>83</sup> In line with the WAHID and SETARA Institutes, Mohammad Iqbal Ahnaf and Hairus Salim, through the Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies at Gadjah Mada University (CRCS UGM) in Yogyakarta, published their comprehensive research in 2017 as *Krisis Keistimewaan: Kekerasan terhadap Minoritas di Yogyakarta*.<sup>84</sup> One focus of the research was vigilantism against minority groups such as Christianity, *Ahmadiyah*, *Shi'a*, LGBT, etc. Ahnaf and Salim say that the perpetrators of intolerant actions in Yogyakarta are the *Front Umat Islam* (FUI) and the *Front Jihad Islam* (FJI).<sup>85</sup> FUI and FJI are an alliance of several Islamic organizations such as *Mujahidin*, *Laskar Jihad* (Front Jihad), *Pemuda Muhammadiyah* (Youth of Muhammadiyah), *Remaja Masjid* (Teenager of Mosque), and *Gerakan Pemuda Ka'bah* (Youth Ka'bah Movement), which is a branch organization of *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP, the United Development Party).<sup>86</sup> Both FUI and FJI are radical Islamic organizations and stand on *Salafism* or *Wahhabism*.

FUI and FJI attacked other Islamic groups, such as *Ahmadiyah* and *Shi'a*, which are categorized as heretic sects; Christian groups, by attacking Christian celebrations and forcibly closing some church buildings; and LGBT groups, by attacking them for their life-styles and closing the transgender *pondok pesantren* “*Al-Fatah*.” For FUI, being LGBT is a disease that

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83. Halili, Henry Thomas Simarmata, and Bonar Tigor Naipospos, Ringkasan Eksekutif Indeks Kota Toleran (IKT) Tahun 2017 (SETARA Institute dan Unit Kerja Presiden Pembinaan Ideologi Pancasila, 2017), <http://setara-institute.org/indeks-kota-toleran-tahun-2017/>.

84. Mohammad Iqbal Ahnaf and Hairus Salim, *Krisis Keistimewaan: Kekerasan terhadap Minoritas di Yogyakarta* (Yogyakarta: CRCS UGM, 2017).

85. Ahnaf and Salim, *Krisis Keistimewaan*, 84.

86. Ahnaf and Salim, *Krisis Keistimewaan*, 64-9.

must be healed. In 2016, FUI protested and intimidated the Duta Wacana Christian University (DWCU) about a picture of a DWCU Muslim student wearing hijab as a promotion for the 2016/2017 academic year on a billboard in front of the DWCU campus. FUI argued that the picture was *menyesatkan kaum Muslimin*, which means “causes Muslim women to go astray.”<sup>87</sup> This became a national issue and Muslim alumnae gave witness through social media about their experiences when they studied at DWCU as a Christian university, which holds the values of interreligious identity, multiculturalism, and pluralism.<sup>88</sup> This case shows how the radical Islamic groups did not respect the independence of campuses as protected by Indonesian law. FUI and FJI are the main bringers of intolerance in Yogyakarta, including the recent violence toward *sedekah laut* (the offering to the sea) as part of Javanese cultural heritage.<sup>89</sup>

In the case of *sedekah laut*, along with Syafii Maarif as I describe above, the Queen of Kraton Yogyakarta, G.K.R. Hemas<sup>90</sup> and the general secretary of *Nahdatul Ulama* (NU), Helmy Faishal Zaini,<sup>91</sup> condemned the violence. They affirmed that *sedekah laut* is part of the existing Indonesian culture as well as part of Indonesian identity. Another NU figure of Yogyakarta, K.H. Abdul Muhaimin, the leader of *Pondok Pesantren Ummahat*, Kotagede,

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87. Ahnaf and Salim, *Krisis Keistimewaan*, 63.

88. Ahnaf and Salim, *Krisis Keistimewaan*, 72-3. Ahnaf and Salim quote the witnesses of two DWCU alumnae: Arga Nugraha Wowa and Siti Rofiah.

89. Shinta Maharani and Syailendra Perdana, “Dirjen Kebudayaan: Larangan Sedekah Laut Seperti Merusak Identitas,” *TEMPO.CO*, October 22, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1138843/dirjen-kebudayaan-larang-sedekah-laut-seperti-merusak-identitas/full&view=ok>.

90. Shinta Maharani and Amirullah, “GKR Hemas Menilai Pelarangan Sedekah Laut Upaya Merusak Budaya,” *TEMPO.CO*, October 15, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1136300/gkr-hemas-menilai-pelarangan-sedekah-laut-upaya-merusak-budaya/full&view=ok>.

91. Pribadi Wicaksono and Syailendra Perdana, “Sekjen NU Kecam Teror Sedekah Laut di Yogyakarta,” *TEMPO.CO*, October 14, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1136179/sekjen-nu-kecam-teror-acara-sedekah-laut-di-yogyakarta/full&view=ok>.

stated that opposition to *sedekah laut* shows how religion is understood only as dogma. Moreover, due to the intimidation of the transgender *pondok pesantren* “*Al-Fatah*,” Muhaimin says, “I affirmed that I defend the transgendered’s right to worship. Even though, I am accused of being a *kafir* (non-believer) and liberal.”<sup>92</sup> However, FUI and FJI’s actions are against ruling UU No. 13 Tahun 2012 UU Keistimewaan DIY (the Law of Yogyakarta Special Region), which emphasizes nurturing, empowering, developing and strengthening values, norms, customs, and noble Javanese tradition, which is grounded in the society of Yogyakarta.

More recently still, the increasing intolerance in Yogyakarta occurred at the same time as the government of Yogyakarta city published the *Handbook Ilmu Kawruh Jiwa: Suryomentaram, Riwayat, dan Jalan Menuju Bahagia* in 2015. The main purpose of the handbook is that people, especially those living in the city of Yogyakarta, can learn from Ki Ageng Suryomentaram (1892-1962), a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta who renounced his title to live as an ordinary person, especially through his *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) based on *raos* (intuitive inner self). *Raos* as a Javanese philosophy of life becomes the core of understanding the self, others, cosmos, and the Ultimate Reality for peaceful coexistence in daily life. Paradoxically, the intolerance in Yogyakarta is opposite from *Kawruh Jiwa*, which means the radical Islamic movement suppressed *raos* as a Javanese philosophy within its homeland, in which Yogyakarta is a center of Javanese culture and wisdom.

Having set the stage, Indonesia as a pluralistic country is facing an essential problem of intolerance that should be seen not only as an issue of religious intolerance, but also as a totality as it exists in a nation with hundreds of ethnic groups, cultures, official religions,

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92. Shinta Maharani and Juli Hantoro, “Suara Agamawan dan Budayawan Soal Perusakan Sedekah Laut,” *TEMPO.CO*, November 5, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1143027/suara-agamawan-dan-budayawan-soal-perusakan-sedekah-laut/full&view=ok>.

indigenous beliefs, etc. However, religion has become a sensitive issue in the midst of “overdoses of religious life,” which led many people to ambivalence about being faithful to “God” and being hateful to those who are different from them. In many cases, the radical Islamic groups use the power of a single majority to condemn people who have different opinions as blasphemers, even in the context of political opinion. The most recent incident occurred when Grace Nathalie, the chair of *Partai Solidaritas Indonesia* (PSI, Indonesian Solidarity Party), gave a speech for the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PSI in Jakarta on November 12, 2018. She stated that PSI rejects *Shari’a* and the Gospel as the basis for Indonesian law because *Pancasila* is the only foundation for the nation-building of Indonesia. Because of her political statement, Eggi Sudjana, as a lawyer for *Persaudaraan Pekerja Muslim Indonesia* (PPMI, the Indonesian Muslim Worker Union) reported Nathalie to the police for having committed blasphemy.<sup>93</sup> This indicates how the radical Islamic movement is against democracy as Machasin states:

When Islamic fundamentalists refute democracy, for example, *they do so not because of its inadequacy to protect human dignity*, but because Islam historically embraces the caliphate system. They consider this the proper political system that Muslims should revive, no matter how it came about and deviant ways in which it was implemented in Islamic history. They close their eyes to any humanly created system that may be closer to basic Islamic teaching like justice and peace.<sup>94</sup>

Thus, the *fatwa* of MUI and radical Islamic movements do not point to religious issues, especially for Islam, but are a national polemic which relates to the wider issue of sustaining the life of the pluralistic existence of Indonesia.

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93. Lisy Sri Rahayu, “Eggi Sudjana Laporkan Grace Nathalie Soal PSI Tolak Perda Syariah,” *detikNews*, November 12, 2018, [https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4304986/eggi-sudjana-laporkan-grace-natalie-soal-psi-tolak-perda-syariah?\\_ga=2.31116607.1263012072.1541994554-1086319696.1507259154](https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4304986/eggi-sudjana-laporkan-grace-natalie-soal-psi-tolak-perda-syariah?_ga=2.31116607.1263012072.1541994554-1086319696.1507259154). PSI is a new party in which the members are mostly of a younger generation.

94. Machasin, “Islamic Fundamentalist Movement,” 30. Emphasis added.

Referring to the numerous intolerant actions against the heritage of Indonesian cultures, such as the *sedekah laut* ceremony in Yogyakarta (October 2018) and the *Gandrung Sewu* cultural festival in Banyuwangi, East Java (October 2018), the violent actions of radical Islamic groups have the potential to lead to genocide against multiethnic and multicultural Indonesians in the name of a “sanctifying religion.”<sup>95</sup> In his book *Blood that Cries Out from the Earth*, Jones states:

Religions, however, do not simply justify violence the way other ideologies do. For religiously motivated terrorists, *violence takes on a sacred purpose. Violence and genocide can become religious imperatives*, carrying a cosmic or spiritual meaning beyond that provided by any political or legal authority.<sup>96</sup>

The radical Islamic movement plays on prejudice and authoritarianism. They even disrespect their own country’s history. For example, Islamic fundamentalism has been influencing *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah* (DPRD, the Regional People’s Representative Council) of the city of Serang, West Java, by destroying and discarding the statue of a national hero, Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.<sup>97</sup>

Due to their closed-mindedness, radical Islamic groups see others who are different from them as enemies. The radical Islamic movement demonstrated bloody and sadistic killing against the Islamic groups *Ahmadiyah* in Cikeusik, West Java and the *Shi’a* in Madura, as well as Christians in Maluku. Thousands of people were killed due to the arrogance of religious power. Thus, did it lead to genocide? The correlation between religious violence and genocide must be seen as a serious threat to humanity. Likewise, with violent

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95. Ardian Fanani, “Ini Alasan FPI Tolak Festival Gandrung Sewu,” *detikNews*, October 18, 2018, <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-timur/d-4263003/ini-alasan-fpi-tolak-festival-gandrung-sewu>.

96. Jones, *Blood that Cries Out*, 64.

97. Bahtiar Rifa’i, “Patung Pahlawan Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa,” *detikNews*, November 10, 2018, <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4295854/patung-pahlawan-sultan-ageng-tirtayasa-ditemukan-di-sungai>.

actions against the cultural heritage of Indonesian ethnic groups, these actions indicate the genocide of Indonesia as an identity, as a people, and as a nation. How do we see fundamentalism as an “ism” at the heart of genocide in the name of religion? As J. Harold Ellens describes,

*Fundamentalism is a psychological pathology that can shape and take possession of the frame work of thought and action in any arena of life, and particularly any ideology. This makes religion particularly vulnerable to the pathology of Fundamentalism, a dangerous heresy almost anywhere we find it. The danger in Fundamentalism takes the shape of false Orthodoxies. They are dangerous in many ways, but especially in the ways in which they corrupt the truth, disrupt community, violate personal and communal prerogatives, and promote sociopolitical and physical-material strategies of destruction.*<sup>98</sup>

That fundamentalism can be found in all religions is unavoidable. Fundamentalism easily devolves into violent actions because it relates to an authoritarianism which says that only one’s or a group’s religion is *the* true path. For decades, Indonesia as a pluralistic country has been practicing interreligious dialogue in many forms, even though the practices experience difficult challenges due to the increase of the radical Islamic movement.

### Inadequacies of the Four Forms of Interreligious Dialogue

Interreligious dialogue in Indonesia began in November 1969. Mukti Ali, a Muslim scholar and a former Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia from 1973 to 1978, initiated the idea of interreligious dialogue by discussing the idea with his Protestant

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98. J. Harold Ellens, “Fundamentalism, Orthodoxy, and Violence,” in *The Destructive Power of Religion: Violence in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, vol. 4, *Contemporary Views on Spirituality and Violence*, ed. J. Harold Ellens (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 140. Emphasis added.

and Catholic friends.<sup>99</sup> From that time, interreligious dialogue developed a variety of forms in both academic and societal contexts.

In light of the common forms of interreligious dialogue, I will give an overview of the implementation of the four forms in Indonesia. Paul Hedges, in his book *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue and the Theology of Religions*, describes the four common forms of interreligious dialogue: the dialogue of the theological exchange, the dialogue of life, the dialogue of action, and the dialogue of religious experience.

First is the *dialogue of theological exchange*: “This is intellectual, and is generally concerned with discussing theological and philosophical concepts, comparing ideas and concepts, etc. It is also known as *discursive dialogue*.”<sup>100</sup> For decades in Yogyakarta there has been a scholarly exchange between the Faculty of Theology at Duta Wacana Christian University and Sunan Kalijaga Islamic State University through a variety of interreligious programs, such as faculty members from one university going to the other for courses, seminars, research projects, intensive study on Islam for pastors,<sup>101</sup> and publishing books. One significant book project published is the two volume *Meniti Kalam Kerukunan* (Footbridge of Harmony), an encyclopedia of Islamic and Christian terms.<sup>102</sup> The authors of

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99. Munawir Aziz, “Meneropong Masa depan Dialog Agama,” *NU Online*, January 30, 2012, <http://www.nu.or.id/post/read/36078/meneropong-masa-depan-dialog-antar-agama>.

100. Paul Hedges, *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue and the Theology of Religions* (London: SSM Press, 2010), 60. See also, Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, *God Beyond Borders: Interreligious Learning Among Faith Communities* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

101. The Center for Religious Studies (PSAA, *Pusat Studi Agama-Agama*) of Faculty of Theology at Duta Wacana Christian University has an annual intensive study on Islam (SITI, *Studi Intensif Tentang Islam*) for pastors. The length of intensive study is ten days and the professors are from UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta.

102. Nur Kholis Setiawan and Djaka Soetapa, eds., *Meniti Kalam Kerukunan: Beberapa Istilah Kunci Dalam Islam & Kristen* Jilid 1 (Jakarta: BPK. Gunung Mulia, 2010).



this work were scholars from Duta Wacana Christian University, Sunan Kalijaga Islamic State University, and St. Paul Catholic Seminary.<sup>103</sup> The main purpose of the encyclopedia is to have mutual understanding of Islamic and Christian terms based on proper discourse, such as “jihad,” “baptism,” “communion sanctorum,” etc. For young people, there are discursive dialogues through interdisciplinary groups. At Duta Wacana Christian University, for example, one such program for students is Spiritual Formation, which is an interreligious camp with a particular theme, such as natural disasters and theodicy. The students, all of whom are from different disciplines, study the theme from different religious perspectives, such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. More recently, at the annual Youth Peace Camp, the core program focused on interreligious relationships. All the participants come from different religious backgrounds, and learn from each other through discussions and visiting places of worship, such as mosques, churches, temples, etc.

Second is the *dialogue of life*: “Here, people are seen as central and it is the interaction between them on a personal level that is seen as important. It tends to dominate at grassroots levels, being concerned with day-to-day meeting and encountering, and is therefore also appropriately termed *human dialogue*.”<sup>104</sup> For Indonesians who have a communal culture, human dialogue is natural for interreligious and intercultural dialogues because it is *life itself*. In light of this communal culture, chatting with a person on the street can be an insightful conversation because it is, in fact, a sharing of life experience. This is in contrast to the individualist culture found in many Western countries. In Yogyakarta,

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Nur Kholis Setiawan and Djaka Soetapa, eds., *Meniti Kalam Kerukunan: Beberapa Istilah Kunci Dalam Islam & Kristen* Jilid 2 (Jakarta: BPK. Gunung Mulia, 2014).

103. On each volume I have had the opportunity to write: in the volume 1 “Spiritualitas” (562-87) and in the volume 2 “Komunitas” (431-52).

104. Hedges, *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue*, 60-1.

*angkringan*, a type of cart used to sell street food, is not only a place to eat but also a place to socialize in the community. The more “intimate” dialogue of life can be found in the multireligious family. This is very common for Indonesians, with my own family providing an example: my grandparents were Confucian, my aunt is Catholic, my older brother’s family is Presbyterian, my sister is a Catholic *nun*, my youngest brother’s family is Mennonite, and I am an ordained pastor within the Mennonite Church. In fact, we never debate religious differentiations; what we do is support and respect each other as a family.

Third is the *dialogue of action*: “This is concerned with people coming together around areas not seen as primarily ‘religious’ ... but with more ‘mundane’ affairs, such as human rights, ecological concerns, or other areas of social activism. This is not to say that there may not be common ‘religious’ values that inspire the work. It is also known as *secular dialogue*.”<sup>105</sup> In 2006 a massive earthquake struck Yogyakarta, and the volcano Mount Merapi erupted in 2010. On one hand, these two natural disasters ruined houses and fields, and killed thousands of people; but, on the other hand, empathic and compassionate responses built humanity. People worked hand-in-hand for recovery beyond their own identities of ethnicity, religion, gender, and social status. For example, when Mennonite congregations surrounding Mount Muria in Central Java distributed their donations to the city at the epicenter of earthquake in Bantul, Yogyakarta, *Laskar Hizbullah* (Corps of Hezbollah) Sunan Bonang from the city of Solo guided the distribution. Previously, the *Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia* (Muria Christian Church of Indonesia), a Mennonite denomination, and *Laskar Hizbullah* Sunan Bonang helped post-tsunami in Aceh in 2004 through the Mennonite Diakonia Service (MDS). These are examples of *dialogue of action* between two radical groups: *Laskar Hizbullah* as a radical Islamic group and the Mennonites as a radical non-

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105. Hedges, *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue*, 61.

violent Christian group.<sup>106</sup> The dialogue of action also occurred post-eruption of Mount Merapi, in which many groups from a variety of organizations reforested the mountain. This dialogue was an example of ecological concern.

Fourth is the *dialogue of religious experience*: “This is where individuals or groups come together to share, either through explanation or practice, what are termed ‘contemplative,’ ‘spiritual,’ or ‘mystical’ experiences. It is also known as *interior dialogue*.”<sup>107</sup> This dialogue is categorized as a sensitive form in Indonesia because it is very easy to misinterpret as Christianization or Islamization. This form is limited to practice for academic purposes, such as monthly contextualization of the Javanese Mass of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at *Candi Ganjuran* in Bantul, Yogyakarta. Several undergraduate and graduate students from universities in Yogyakarta attend the Mass for field research. Because the emphasis of this dialogue is on spiritual or mystical experience, i.e., beyond one’s dogmatic understanding, I interpret that this dialogue takes a step forward to embrace the religious standpoint of others, without losing one’s own religious standpoint. In this dialogue, one is able to see God in others’ beliefs, even in different religious practices. Thus, with *interior dialogue* it is not necessary to have a meeting for sharing experiences, but it can be a “sharing of presence” as *Gusdurian* and *Banser NU* (*Barisan Ansor Serbaguna* NU, the Nahdatul Ulama’s Ansor Multipurpose Front) do. With the increase of Islamic fundamentalism, some believe it is *haram* (prohibited) for Muslims to greet others during their religious celebrations, such as saying “*Merry Christmas*” to Christians or “*Happy Vesak*” to Buddhists; in contrast, *Gusdurian* takes an opposite approach from the fundamentalists by “visiting with

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106. This unique experiences was written by Agus Suyanto and Paulus Hartono, *Laskar dan Mennonite: Perjumpaan Islam-Kristen untuk Perdamaian Indonesia* (Jakarta: BPK. Gunung Mulia, 2016).

107. Hedges, *Controversies in Interreligious Dialogue*, 61.

empathy” (*silaturahmi*) the churches in the midst of Christmas or other religious celebrations. Additionally, Banser NU, along with the police, guard the celebrations of other religions because of the trend of suicide bombing. Riyanto, a member of Banser NU became a “martyr of tolerance” when a radical Islamic group attacked a Christmas Eve Service at a church in Mojokerto, East Java in 2000.<sup>108</sup>

The implementation of the four forms of interreligious dialogue in Indonesia is an ongoing process, and, of course, there are many other examples that I do not have space to include in the present text. The examples above draw the four forms of interreligious dialogue into nurturing Indonesia as a pluralistic country. The increase of *Wahhabism* and the *fatwa* of MUI against pluralism, liberalism, and secularism have become a challenge for interreligious dialogue as there are opposing views between *Wahhabism* and the *fatwa*, and interreligious dialogue, between being closed-off and being open to other religions, respectively. It seems there is a shift in emphasis necessary, from finding God beyond dogma to finding humanity beyond religion. In fact, every religion has two faces; one is the destructive power of humanity, and the other is the constructive power for peace and harmonious living. Tom Stella quotes Wendell Berry, who says, “Perhaps the greatest disaster of human history is one that happened to or within religion: that is the conceptual division between the holy and the world, the excerpting of Creator from creation.”<sup>109</sup> Thus, a shift in emphasis is necessary before humanity is lost.

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108. Ishommudin, “Belajar Toleransi dari Riyanto, Banser Korban Bom Natal,” *TEMPO.CO*, December 26, 2016, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/830614/belajar-toleransi-dari-riyanto-banser-korban-bom-natal/full&view=ok>.

109. Tom Stella, *Finding God beyond Religion: A Guide for Skeptics, Agnostics & Unorthodox Believers Inside & Outside the Church*, Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths, 2013), 1. Stella does not provide the resource that he quoted from Berry.

## Conclusion

As I quoted above with Rose's statement, religious fundamentalism, extremism or radicalism has risen globally in the midst of democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including in Indonesia. Indeed, Indonesia was a more peaceful country with its pluralistic existence before the rise of the radical Islamic movement in the last two decades. The movement is a fundamental threat to Indonesia as a country, especially the way of valuing within the governmental system, but also Indonesia as a people who value all of humanity. Indonesian humanity is rooted and grounded in the multiplicity of existences. When the radical movement expresses arrogance through religious power, it attempts to change Indonesia into a mono-existence, thus, destroying its very nature.

Unavoidably, Indonesia as a pluralistic country has struggled with the latent problem of SARA, but has its own path to resolve the struggle, based on *harmony* as the philosophy of life. Harmony is like an "immune system" that already exists in the nature of Indonesia, such as how the Javanese ethnic group has *raos* (intuitive inner self). Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, a Javanese mystic, determines *raos sami* (*raos* of others) as the way to *memayu hayuning bawana* (to adorn the world) for living harmoniously and peacefully. The determining of *raos sami* is best expressed through a proverb: "*Mereka yang bukan saudaramu dalam iman adalah saudaramu dalam kemanusiaan*" (Those who are not your brothers and sisters in faith are your brothers and sisters in humanity). *Raos* is only one type among hundreds of types of harmony which are a part of each ethnic group's existence. Thus, to protect the nature of Indonesia from the toxic disharmony of fundamentalism, Indonesians must foster harmony as an "immune system" of life for diversity in humanity.

In light of Asian culture, Peter Phan defines harmony not as a pragmatic strategy but as an Asian approach to reality; harmony "is not 'an absence of strife' but rather the result of

‘acceptance of diversity and richness.’”<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Phan states that, fundamentally, “harmony is an Asian *spirituality*.”<sup>111</sup> The acceptance of diversity and richness has been practiced through interreligious dialogue, but I propose that interreligious dialogue needs the complement of *interspirituality*. Wayne Teasdale’s notion of interspirituality points to “the openness of people who have viable spiritual life, coupled with their determination, capacity, and commitment to the inner search across traditions.”<sup>112</sup> Interspirituality emphasizes an integration of life in which there is no separation between the sacred and the profane, and promotes mystical life for peaceful living in the world.

Being religious is to be interreligious.<sup>113</sup>

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110. Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 123.

111. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously*, 123.

112. Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World’s Religions* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 1999), 26.

113. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously*, 123-7. Phan did not write this literally, but I reformulated the idea in his book.

## CHAPTER 2

### Wayne Teasdale's Notion of Interspirituality and Its Relevance to Indonesia

#### Introduction

*"Interspirituality is cosmically open ... All [beings], in all possible worlds, are our brothers and sisters, belonging to the large sacred community of the cosmos."*<sup>114</sup>

- Wayne Teasdale

For decades, religions have been constructing interreligious dialogues on local, regional, and global levels. Interreligious dialogue grows as a practice in social life and as an academic field. However, religious problems continue to occur in various forms around the world, including "holy violence." In many areas, religious life acts more divisively to divide, due to doctrines, rituals, or clothes, instead of unifying relationships among people. Wayne Teasdale offers that the notion of interspirituality can be a complement to interreligious dialogue. The core of interspirituality is self-transcendence through the cosmic consciousness. This consciousness encourages people to be a communal consciousness of the sacred life in the world. Interspirituality retains the value of religious traditions and local wisdom in order to find the intersection of values for living together. However, interspirituality is more than a tolerant practice in diversity; rather, it is an attentiveness of the self in the reality of humanity as a mystical way. Interspirituality recommends a new approach of being holistically spiritual, especially for living peacefully in pluralistic countries such as Indonesia.

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114. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 240. Emphasis added.

### *Spirituality and Self-Transcendence*

#### Spirituality

“What is spirituality?” is a fundamental question in understanding the notion of interspirituality. According to Christianity, the origin of the term *spirituality* is rooted in the Latin *spiritus* or *spiritualitas*. In the New Testament, the idea of spirituality appears as the Greek *pneuma*, meaning “spirit.” *Pneuma* in the New Testament refers to the human spirit which is in tune with the Holy Spirit too. *Pneuma* and *spiritus* do not have a dichotomous meaning in terms of the physical body, *soma* (Greek) and *corpus* (Latin). *Soma* and *corpus*, as the physical body, do not always have a negative meaning, such as selfishness or antagonism toward God. However, the Greek *sarx* and Latin *caro*, both meaning “flesh,” do have these negative connotations. These three types of terms (*pneuma* and *spiritus*, *soma* and *corpus*, *sarx* and *caro*) show a continuum of spiritual and positive, to physical and neutral, to physical and negative. This continuum clarifies that the term *spirituality* should not be understood in a sense of opposition between the material and physical.

Additionally, in the Old Testament, the spirit of God comes from the Hebrew *ruach*, which means wind, breath, spirit or “divine power.”<sup>115</sup> The divine power refers to the awesome power which has a transformative and mysterious energy. The *ruach* has connotations higher than the *nephes*, as *nephes* tends “more to stand for the ‘lower’ aspect of [humans’] consciousness, the personal but merely human life in [people], the seat of his [or

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115. J. D. G. Dunn, “Spirit, Holy Spirit,” in *New Bible Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. D.R. W. Wood (Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1996), 1125.



her] appetites, emotions, and passions (so regularly).”<sup>116</sup> The origin of the term *ruach*, the spirit, shows innate presence in the cosmos and sustains the life of creation. *Ruach* shows the presence of God in the world, including human beings. Both the Old and New Testament confirm the dwelling of God’s spirit in the human spirit and body, which gives a positive value to the physical body.

However, over the centuries, there have been a variety of interpretations of the term *spirituality*, from the notions to the practices, based on personal, communal, cultural, and world context.<sup>117</sup> Because of this, there have been many types of spirituality through different eras, locations, and cultures. In the contemporary era, spirituality is not only a lived experience but also an academic discipline that is studied by scholars from many different approaches. To define *spirituality*, I have selected Sandra M. Schneiders, David. B. Perrin, and Philip F. Sheldrake, who have contributed greatly to this field of study.

Sandra M. Schneiders<sup>118</sup>

Sandra M. Schneiders defines spirituality as “the actualization of the basic *human capacity for transcendence* ... as the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value one

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116. Dunn, “Spirit,” 1126. Dunn adds that the word *spirit* has two different attributes depending on the periods. In the Hellenistic era, spirit defines Wisdom. Wisdom is more common than the spirit, even for prophecy. Meanwhile, in rabbinic Judaism, the spirit refers to the spirit of prophecy which is tied to the Torah.

117. See Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 17-112. Sheldrake describes a historical consideration in the study of spirituality in part one of his book. See also, Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 10-3. In Chapter 2, McGrath explains aspects that shape spirituality.

118. Sandra M. Schneiders, IHM is a professor emerita of New Testament Studies and Christian Spirituality in the Jesuit School of Theology at the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California.

perceives.”<sup>119</sup> The subject of spirituality is “the human being as a whole”<sup>120</sup> in which the self and the reality of life are interconnected. At this point, experience of the subject takes an important role in the project of life-integration where value(s) take place. It has three essences: first, the subject’s experience is more a way of life which is not a spontaneous experience but a life-long journey. Second, as a lifelong integration, spirituality refers to a personhood which is influenced by the environment, even the entire cosmos. Third, the spirituality of the subject is rooted in particular value(s) that shape the essence of his or her spirituality, which is called faith, belief, or wisdom. Schneiders affirms that the definition of spirituality above has an inclusive meaning that can be applied to religious and non-religious perspectives.

Thus, spirituality as a human capacity for self-transcendence should be approached historically, theologically, and anthropologically.<sup>121</sup> The historical approach defines spirituality as a lived experience that “takes place only in time and space, within particular contexts,” including cultural and political.<sup>122</sup> These contexts shape the operative spirituality of people. Spirituality does not occur in a vacuum. On one hand, in the context of “a plurality of communities,” finding the theological intersection is a challenge to articulate.<sup>123</sup> On the other hand, spirituality must be comprehended by a multi-disciplinary approach, such as psychology, sociology, neuroscience, etc. This draws from an anthropological approach

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119. Schneiders, “Approaches to the Study of Christian Spirituality,” in *Christian Spirituality*, ed. Arthur Holder (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 16. Emphasis added.

120. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 17.

121. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 19-29.

122. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 21.

123. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 25.

which refers to understanding “spirituality as a feature of humanity.”<sup>124</sup> These approaches affirm that self-transcendence refers to a person as a holistic being in responding to the reality of life. Spirituality is not under the perspective of a dichotomy of spirit and body, but rather a holistic being.

Additionally, Schneiders stresses that spirituality is “not a doctrine or simply a set of practices but an ongoing experience or life project.”<sup>125</sup> The first manner and the basic meaning of spirituality is not in the abstract but in the concrete, as spirituality is lived experience. However, spirituality is not about a practical order of a spiritual practice but a lifelong journey with the purpose of “*life integration*.”<sup>126</sup> Life integration itself confirms the essence of self-transcendence based on value(s), but not for perfection on the stage of achievement. An erroneous desire for perfection can cause a person to easily slip into spiritual narcissism, rather than the growing of humanity, both personal and communal. In spirituality, a person, as a subject, is valued as a holistic being: “spirit, mind, and body; individual and social; culturally conditioned and ecologically intertwined with all creation; economically and politically responsible.”<sup>127</sup> The capacity for self-transcendence is not to belong to a personal group exclusively, but to belong inclusively to humanity in general, across disciplines, denominations, religions or beliefs, and cultures.

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124. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 26.

125. Schneiders, “Christian Spirituality: Definition, Methods and Types,” in *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Philip Sheldrake (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 1.

126. Schneiders, “Christian Spirituality,” 1. Emphasis added.

127. Schneiders, “Approaches,” 17.

In line with Schneiders, David B. Perrin proposes,

Spirituality refers to a fundamental capacity in human beings. It is expressed within human experience before people identify that experience with a particular religious or spiritual set of beliefs, rituals, or ethics. Spirituality, as an innate human characteristic, involves *the capacity for self-transcendence: being meaningfully involved in, and personally committed to, the world beyond an individual's personal boundaries*. This meaningful involvement and commitment shapes the way people live and allows them to integrate their lives.<sup>129</sup>

Perrin emphasizes that spirituality is involved in daily life as the capacity for self-transcendence. Basically, human beings search their lives' value in the span of two poles: life and death. The poles are linked to spirituality in which human beings struggle with "the mystery of the deep questions around the meaning of life."<sup>130</sup> This is the path of self-discernment due to life integration.

The capacity for self-transcendence is a fundamental quality of the self which "surpasses the human condition altogether in order to shape who people are, what they are called to, and what they are to believe. Thus understood, transcendence does not refer exclusively to the sacred or to God, but is a much bigger concept that refers to human potentiality."<sup>131</sup> Human potentiality is inherently in the self, so the self cannot be understood only in its function, but also in the essence of the self itself and beyond in which "the self is not self-establishing" but a dynamic existence. Self-transcendence is more than presence and

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128. David B. Perrin, OMI is professor of Christian Spirituality and Ethics at Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada.

129. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 20. Emphasis added.

130. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 20.

131. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 133.

doing; it is an ongoing process of becoming.<sup>132</sup> There is “something inherent mysterious in the human that grounds the capacity for transcendental values such as justice, reconciliation, love, and peace. *These values cannot be reduced to human pragmatism*: they are the product of a call from elsewhere, however we define or describe their point of origin.”<sup>133</sup> The origin refers to the self as *imago Dei* (the image of God) which inherently relies on a relationship—between the divine, human, and cosmos—in ordinary lives.<sup>134</sup>

Thus, capacity for self-transcendence is inherent in the human existence and is expressed beyond a person’s boundaries such as gender, ethnicity, social status, etc. In other words, spirituality is an ordinary and mundane way of life. Self-transcendence is not a possessive dimension but a natural dimension of the human being. This affirms that spirituality is “lived in the marketplace, in daily encounters where people work, live, and play.”<sup>135</sup> Spirituality is being a part of human domains in the world. Discussing self-transcendence in light of mysticism, Perrin highlights that “mystics have continually shown that *transcendence belongs to the nature of the truly human self* ... [When the human self is reduced it will cause] the diminishment of human freedom, creativity, imagination, hope, and capacity for love.”<sup>136</sup> Self-transcendence is an essential part of mystical life in holistic daily life.

Perrin affirms that spirit refers to “human spirit in sense of human consciousness, a constructive (fundamental) dimension of human beings ... [H]uman spirit involves the

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132. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 134.

133. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 134. Emphasis added.

134. See also p. 134, Perrin highlights, “Christian speaks of the core of this *imago Dei* as being the soul, the place of the dwelling of God in the human person.”

135. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 23.

136. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 134. Emphasis added.

unique human capacity to be self-conscious. Not only do humans exist as physical bodies ... [but] also exist as human spirit, with the capacity for self-consciousness (awareness of being aware).”<sup>137</sup> In light of spirituality, self-consciousness plays an important role for “life-giving and authentic spiritualities ought to make people feel at home in a world of difference and multiplicity; they lead to breathtaking possibilities that bring people to care genuinely for others and the world.”<sup>138</sup> In other words, authentic spirituality, in which the non-narcissistic self exists, is concerned with the value of humanity because self-transcendence moves beyond a narrow focus on his or her own life. Spirituality is about “what it means to be human.”<sup>139</sup> However, the human spirit is not an automatic expression of benevolence and beneficence as humans have a destructive power alongside their constructive desire. On this point, self-liberation becomes an essential part of having authentic spirituality. Perrin argues that self-transcendence is a significant issue in the journey toward self-existence, which has over-emphasized autonomy, independence, and privacy from the seventeenth century to the present.

Philip F. Sheldrake<sup>140</sup>

Philip F. Sheldrake stresses that spirituality is “a way of living publicly.”<sup>141</sup> For Sheldrake, living publicly is a fundamental social existence where diversity is the common

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137. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 21.

138. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 23.

139. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 146.

140. Philip F. Sheldrake is a professor of Christian Spirituality at the University of Durham, England.

141. Sheldrake, “Christian Spirituality as a Way of Living Publicly: A Dialectic of the Mystical and Prophetic,” in *Minding the Spirit: The Study of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Elizabeth A. Dreyer and Mark S. Burrows (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 283.

life, and spirituality can be practiced concretely through interactions and community building. Living publicly is a spiritual way with ups and downs, through safe and risky or unsafe situations. As Sheldrake says, “we cultivate a *contemplative* awareness of the city and of the life in the city so that *transformative* encounters with God occur precisely in and through our immersion in the everyday and then feed back into transformed responses to people and situations.”<sup>142</sup> In other words, spirituality as a way of living publicly covers a resistance to inhumanity because “the everyday world is an authentic theological *locus*.”<sup>143</sup> Sheldrake takes into account a theological perspective of incarnation: that “God becomes human and that the sacred is now to be encountered with time and space, ‘*heaven in ordinary*.’”<sup>144</sup> Spirituality is grounded in time and space as a way to understand the world holistically and without a dichotomous assumption of the sacred and the profane.

Additionally, Sheldrake affirms spirituality as a way where “values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices reflect understanding of God, human identity, and the material world as the context for human transformation.”<sup>145</sup> Context, time and space, is “a primary framework of interpretation in study of theological and spiritual [thought] ... Spirituality is never abstract or pure in form ... The contextual approach to spirituality, in addition, seeks to address not merely explicitly religious issues but the situation of a spiritual tradition within the social

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142. Sheldrake, “Christian Spirituality,” 295. Emphasis added. See also p. 290: Sheldrake describes the meaning of “the city” widely. The city is a complex notion because it includes “symbolic, historical, and physical past if hopes for the future are to be fully grounded.” The city is “a powerful symbol of how we understand community.”

143. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality: History, Theology, and Social Practice* (New York: Paulist Press, 2010), 10.

144. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 10. Emphasis added.

145. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 5.

context as a whole.”<sup>146</sup> In other words, spirituality is a response to a particular context of human life. Spirituality is dealing with concrete lived experiences.

As a way of living publicly, spirituality refers to human identity as the transcendental presence of the self where interiority takes a fundamental role. Sheldrake emphasizes the role of “the self” by comparing Augustine and René Descartes on interiority. Augustine invites each person to reconnect to his or her self by saying, “Return to your heart!”<sup>147</sup> The word heart implies “the interior self, the true self, where God dwells.”<sup>148</sup> This should be understood as an encouragement of renewing human identity as *imago Dei* in which “‘the heart’ stands for ‘the whole self’.”<sup>149</sup> For Augustine, when a person leaves the heart it is the same as if he or she were leaving the true self. Unlike Augustine, Descartes’ dictum *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) identifies the rational self as the emphasis of modern Western thought, where thinking is valued more than feeling. Moreover, Western thought tends to dichotomize between thinking and feeling rather than unifying them.

Sheldrake argues that “Augustine, unlike Descartes, did not seek to separate mind and body but sought salvation for both.”<sup>150</sup> Augustine avoids a split between mind and body, spiritual and physical, and interiority and exteriority in “the self.” The self as a holistic being upholds the notion of spirituality as *living publicly* where the fundamental existence is that

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146. Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1998), 59.

147. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 77.

148. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 77.

149. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 78.

150. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 78.



“to be human is to be rooted in mutual self-giving love.”<sup>151</sup> By being in relationship or being in communion, people celebrate humanity.

These three scholars in the field of spirituality, Schneiders, Perrin, and Sheldrake, highlight four fundamental meanings of spirituality. First, spirituality refers to the capacity for self-transcendence, both personally and communally, as a response to the reality of life. Second, the self is understood as a holistic being that has dimensional existences: mind, body, and spirit, which are neither dichotomous nor splitting. Third, self-transcendence, as the core of spirituality, is not a functional being, but rather the nature of human beings which is drawn to the inclusiveness of spirituality that embraces humanity beyond human-constructed boundaries. Fourth, in self-transcendence there is an inner operative or consciousness that creates a dialectic of contemplation and transformation because spirituality is a lifelong journey. The dialectic points to reciprocal dynamic points of view: inner personal contemplation and outer social transformation within the world in action. Spirituality is not withdrawing from, but rather engaging with the reality of life reflectively and critically. This dialectic sustains what self-transcendence is as *going beyond*.

### Interspirituality

What precisely is meant by the term *interspirituality*? The term was invented by Wayne Teasdale (1945-2004), who was an American Roman Catholic monk and mystic. Teasdale was a disciple of Bede Griffiths (1906-1993), an English Benedictine monk who was also known as Swami Dayanada due to his extensive work within Hinduism. Griffiths elaborated dialogue on interspirituality between Christianity and Hinduism, and also combined Hindu and Christian traditions into the way of Christian *sannyasa*; Teasdale

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151. Sheldrake, *Explorations in Spirituality*, 80.

followed in Griffiths' footsteps. However, Teasdale's way of Christian *sannyasa* is different from Griffiths'. While Griffiths lived in the Shantivanam Ashram in Tamil Nadu, India; Teasdale lived outside the ashram.

As a monk, Teasdale lived in the city as a university lecturer in the US and Canada, as a member of the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, and as a champion of social issues, especially for the homeless in Chicago. In other words, the world became Teasdale's ashram. In this way, Teasdale considered Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity's way of active contemplative work in the world in relation to his own life. Teasdale proposes, "A contemplative in the heart of the world has the opportunity to be aware of, to relate to, to touch and heal this suffering, to be a sign of love and hope to those who are so vulnerable in this difficult and indifferent world."<sup>152</sup> He saw how the world offers people the opportunity for transformation. Teasdale described his discernment of being a *sannyasa* (monk in Hinduism) in the city and his vision of interspirituality in his book *A Monk in the World: Cultivating a Spiritual Life*. Teasdale's vision of interspirituality is, "Perhaps one day we will witness the eventual emergence of a universal order of *sannyasis*: contemplatives or mystics from all traditions united in their awareness, their love, and their dedication to the earth, humankind, and all sentient beings."<sup>153</sup> For Teasdale, interspirituality is a way of integrative spirituality for the human family in the world.

The term *interspirituality* is rooted in a new awareness of "receptivity to the inner treasures of the world's religions."<sup>154</sup> The receptiveness to other religions' treasures is the cornerstone for reconstructing the fragile world as a home of humanity in the spirit of

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152. Teasdale, *A Monk in the World: Cultivating a Spiritual Life* (Novato, CA: New World Library, 2003), 15. This book was published three years after his book *The Mystic Heart*.

153. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 16.

154. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 14.

interdependence. People have a new way of seeing others' religions or spiritualities not as enemies, but as friends. Teasdale describes it as "the way for a universal civilization: a civilization with a *heart*" due to quality of life.<sup>155</sup> In his book *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*, Teasdale affirms that "Spirituality, like religion, derives from mysticism."<sup>156</sup> This becomes the basis of receptiveness to others. Moreover, Teasdale states that religion and spirituality "are not antagonistic to each other; rather, they mutually enrich each other—if their relationship is based on openness and respect."<sup>157</sup> The openness and respect of each leads to an enrichment of religion's treasures and well-being. Spirituality should provoke religion to go deeper beyond religious symbols (rituals, clothes, buildings, and institutions), and rather experience the Ultimate Reality and build humanity. Religion provides a *room* for spirituality to be concreted, especially in dealing with the institutional system or government of a country in which people belong to religious organizations. For Teasdale, spirituality refers to "an individual's solitary search for and discovery of the absolute or the divine ... Spirituality carries with it a conviction that the *transcendental is real*."<sup>158</sup> The transcendence of spirituality has personal and social dimensions.

Teasdale highlights,

*Spirituality is a way of life that affects and includes every moment of existence. [Spirituality] is at once a contemplative attitude, a disposition to a life of depth, and the search for ultimate meaning, direction, and belonging ... Spirituality draws us into the depths of our being, where we come face to face with ourselves, our weakness, and with ultimate mystery.*<sup>159</sup>

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155. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 5.

156. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 10.

157. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 20.

158. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 10. Emphasis added.

159. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 17-8. The second emphasis added.

Leading a spiritual life requires a personal commitment of inner development for fulfilment. Meanwhile, Teasdale notes that “[b]eing *religious* connotes belonging to and practicing a religious tradition. Being *spiritual* suggests a personal commitment to a process of inner development that engages in our totality ... Often, when authentic faith embodies an individual spirituality, the religious and the spirituality will coincide.”<sup>160</sup> However, Teasdale stresses the distinction between religion and spirituality as two different things, in which religious people tend to follow an institution rather than look deeper in the interior. His argument thus:

Spirituality is always about what nourishes. [Religious] tradition is useful as long as it enriches and serves the inner life. When it becomes an obstacle, we need to rethink the hold our religion has on us ... *Religious people without authentic spiritual paths* often *merely* go through the motions of being part of church, synagogue, mosque, or temple. They attend out of a sense of duty, tradition, or social expectation.<sup>161</sup>

Teasdale affirms the value of the inner evolution that draws one to an authentic spiritual journey, because it is only through the inner path that a mystical journey will be achieved in daily life. Being religious is not enough without being spiritual. This is the reason Teasdale tends to spirituality instead of religion, and invented interspirituality rather than using the word interreligious. Teasdale explains,

Interspirituality is the foundation that can prepare the way for a planet-wide enlightened culture, and a continuing community among the religions that is *substantial, vital, and creative*. Interspirituality is not about eliminating the world’s rich diversity of religious expression. It is not about rejecting these traditions’ individuality for a homogenous superspirituality. It is not an attempt to create a new form of spiritual culture. Rather it is an attempt to make available to everyone all the forms the spiritual journey assumes. Interspirituality as a world-changing force is made possible by the openness

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160. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 17.

161. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 20. Emphasis added.

of people who have a viable spiritual life, coupled with their determination, capacity, and commitment to the inner search across traditions.<sup>162</sup>

The explanation above highlights that interspirituality is not a matter of merging religious practices together, but rather an honoring of the spiritual treasures of religions for a life-long journey in the world. The essence of interspirituality is a respect for diversity instead of conformity.

The prefix *inter-* in interspirituality conveys “the essential spiritual interdependence of the religions. Spiritual interdependence among the religions exists because an essential interconnectedness in being and reality exist.”<sup>163</sup> Spiritual interdependence and the interconnectedness of being and reality are intertwined through the values of humanity, such as wholeness. This affirms interspirituality is about self-transcendence. For Teasdale, interspirituality takes place not only among human beings but also across the entire cosmos, because each person is the center of the cosmos.

The prefix *inter-* also indicates “an *eagerness* to communicate with members of other faiths ... [in which] whole human beings who are sensitive, wise, compassionate and loving ... an *openness* to learn from others, and the wisdom of their traditions.”<sup>164</sup> The eagerness and the openness affirm that the way of interspirituality is “an intermystical *intersection* where insights cross back and forth, intermingle, and find new habitats.”<sup>165</sup> Interspirituality is about a way of living in which the spiritual interdependence of religions is not for the religions themselves but rather with respect for humanity and the cosmos as a total being and reality for living, without becoming a universalist. In light of the interconnectedness of being

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162. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 26. Emphasis added.

163. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 27.

164. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 27.

165. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 27.

and reality, interspirituality, as the way of living, is due to a “capacity for love, friendship, and loyalty.”<sup>166</sup> Interspirituality is a mutual concern and commitment to a tripartite dialogue: “the dialogue of the head, heart, and hands.”<sup>167</sup> This tripartite dialogue demonstrates that in interspirituality, a person is a holistic being with the capacity for self-transcendence.

Three scholars above—Schneiders, Perrin, Sheldrake—and Teasdale as well, are in line with regard to the idea of self-transcendence as the core of spirituality. Self-transcendence, in the sense of present totality as being, creates a new way of living with others that brings to life integration based on human community through interspirituality.

### ***Consciousness as the Source of the True Self***

Teasdale uses the terms interspirituality and intermysticism interchangeably because spirituality develops from personal mystical consciousness, which takes an important role, as seen when Teasdale employs the term *mystic heart*:

*The Mystic Heart* is a tool for everyone seriously committed to living the spiritual life regardless of circumstance. We don’t need to enter monasteries to be mystics or to cultivate our spirituality. We are all mystics! The mystic heart is the deepest part of who or what we really are. We need only to realize and activate that essential part of our being.<sup>168</sup>

The mystic heart is available to everyone who opens to others and is eager to live in the communion of human family. The communion itself is possible when each person values the truth in various religious traditions and cultures. The mystical heart becomes the inner meeting point for people from many different traditions, in which they are able to individually effect self-transcendence within the scope of communal living. The mystic heart

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166. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 28.

167. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 29.

168. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 12.

is applied to theistic and non-theistic religions and beliefs. The mystic heart is about self-consciousness that refers to self-identity, both personally and communally. The basic and common question of self-identity is “Who am I?” To answer this question, Teasdale proposes an intersection between religious and philosophical perspectives on themes: *Atman* and *Brahman*, *Shunyata* and *Nirvana*, and the soul.

#### *Atman and Brahman*

Teasdale refers to Hinduism in *Atman is Brahman and Brahman is Atman* as “the pure mystical realization”<sup>169</sup> and not as a concept. *Brahman* is “the way to inner awareness of the self [and] *Atman* [is] the immanent presence of *Brahman* within all beings and every particle of reality.”<sup>170</sup> According to the contemplative wisdom of the *Sanatana Dharma*, there are four utterances: first, the nature of *Brahman* is “consciousness [that] can be translated as perception or intelligence.”<sup>171</sup> This is an affirmation that Brahman does not have a correlation with a mythological being, such as an old man with a long beard. In Hinduism, *Brahman* is consciousness within “the full divine mystery” of the entire cosmos.<sup>172</sup> The immanent presence of *Brahman* can be felt as a mystical experience through the hiddenness of “the *guha* or cave of the heart.”<sup>173</sup> Entering the *guha* is the way to unveil the mystery by encountering the immanent presence of the divine in the cosmos within the deepest heart of the self in ordinary, daily life. Second, “*Atman* is Brahman and Brahman is Atman. The inner reality of the self in [human beings] is Brahman” where the truth takes place in human

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169. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 52.

170. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 52.

171. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 52.

172. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 53.

173. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 53.

existence.<sup>174</sup> This upholds the non-dualism of Hinduism as the self is integrated with the universe or cosmos. Third, everyone is an eternal *Atman*, which has the divine aspect of the “ultimate human identity.”<sup>175</sup> The divine aspect is inherent in the identity of *Atman* in the world, experienced here as the reality of life. Fourth, I am *Brahman*; this identifies an ultimate or “supreme divine nature in the human person ... [each person can access] or ‘tune into’ the *Brahman*. The mystic ‘hears’ and ‘feels’ God’s self-awareness, and shares in it to the level of declaring, with *Brahman*, ‘I am *Brahman*.’”<sup>176</sup> These four utterances express the intimate relationship between the human being and the divine reality; they are different but not dual existences because the ultimate reality of being as a human is *Atman* and *Brahman*.

*Atman is Brahman and Brahman is Atman* is the true identity of the human being through consciousness as “the medium in and through” the state of self-existence in the life-long journey.<sup>177</sup> Joseph A. Bracken refers to Raimundo Panikkar, “Consciousness is not a substance, but an action, an act. *Brahman* has no consciousness, and thus no self-consciousness. *Brahman* is consciousness.”<sup>178</sup> The notion of *Brahman is consciousness* affirms that consciousness belongs to human nature without any exception, and is a doorway for every person in inquiry of his or her true self. Hinduism affirms that the true self should be understood in relationship with others. Additionally, Kiseong Shin refers to Sankara as “everyone has the same self which is the highest self, but each person is responsible for his [or] her actions and the results of that actions (*karma*) just as the different shapes of the

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174. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 53. Italics is original.

175. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 53.

176. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 54.

177. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 55.

178. Joseph B. Bracken, *The Divine Matrix: Creativity as Link between East and West* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2006), 79.



reflection of the same reality result from the circumstances of the water that reflects the reality.”<sup>179</sup> There is a respect to “unity-in-diversity,” but in the reality of life, there is ignorance in relation to others.<sup>180</sup> Thus, the true self in *Atman is Brahman and Brahman is Atman* teaches “[a] relationship with others—God, human beings, and all other non-human creatures—is crucial, and [people] need to deal with it *with respect* because they are none other than our true self.”<sup>181</sup> In other words, true self must be the reference of humanity during the lifelong journey.

### *Shunyata and Nirvana*

In Buddhism, the concept of personal identity must be approached in the integration of experience and awareness through the way of *shunyata* (Sanskrit), meaning emptiness as “the inner reality of enlightenment.”<sup>182</sup> Referring to Keiji Nishitani, Shin highlights, “*S[h]unyata* is not self-affirmative, but completely self-negative. Emptiness empties everything in the world including emptiness itself.”<sup>183</sup> Nishitani affirms, “The emptiness of *śūnyatā* is not an emptiness represented as some ‘thing’ outside of being and other than being. It is not simply an ‘empty nothing,’ but rather an *absolute emptiness*, emptied even of these representations of emptiness.”<sup>184</sup> In other words, *shunyata* does not mean nihilism but interconnectedness of all beings for a total reality. *Shunyata* is “the heart of the Buddhist

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179. Kiseong Shin, *The Concept of the Self in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity and Its Implication for Interfaith Relations* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2017), 37.

180. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 38.

181. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 48-9. Emphasis added.

182. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 56.

183. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 67.

184. Keiji Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, trans. Jan Van Bragt (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982), 123.

view ... [where] everyone and everything arises together, and so are inherently interdependent.”<sup>185</sup> Through this essential interconnectedness, “a higher happiness is possible.”<sup>186</sup> In *shunyata*, there is no place for selfish desire because the selfish desire is the root of human “suffering”<sup>187</sup> into which a person slips easily, with all “the perils of uncontrolled craving.”<sup>188</sup> In many cases in life, people are drawn to their desires without any reflection.

Emptiness as the central insight is called the *Heart Sutra*: “Form is emptiness and the very emptiness is form; emptiness does not differ from form, nor does form differ from emptiness; whatever is form that is emptiness, whatever is emptiness that is form.”<sup>189</sup> *Shunyata* is a “dynamic movement of emptying, not a static state of emptiness.”<sup>190</sup> *Shunyata* is also a paradox: “emptiness = fullness, fullness = emptiness,”<sup>191</sup> because *shunyata* is “the Ultimate Reality and the Absolute.”<sup>192</sup> The *Heart Sutra* is the immanence of interconnectedness and the transcendence of emptiness as the way of finding self-identity

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185. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 56.

186. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 56.

187. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 57.

188. James W. Heisig, *Nothingness and Desire: A Philosophical Antiphony* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2013), 15. See also p. 18: Heisig refers to “the *Dhammapada* with regard to the *dhmma* or universal law taught by Buddha: the liberation from slavery to our cravings is achieved by accepting a common ground in reality with the best part our human being. Indeed the idea of a “religious instinct” to which we renounce ourselves constitutes one of the most important—and perhaps also most universal—rationales for transcending private interests to be found in human cultures. To this extent, it provides a way into the discovery of desire freed of the objects of desire.”

189. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 57.

190. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 67.

191. Hans Waldenfels, *Absolute Nothingness: Foundations for a Buddhist-Christian Dialogue*, trans. J. W. Heisig (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 72.

192. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 67.

beyond selfish desire. Teasdale highlights that *shunyata* or emptiness is “pure, nondual awareness, free from any form ... absolute and unconditioned; nothing arises or passes away ... eternal, unchanging, ineffable, blissful, and secure, like nirvana itself.”<sup>193</sup> *Shunyata* or emptiness is about making space that immanent and transcendent truth may occupy during the life journey.

*Nirvana* is a word that many people misunderstand as heaven. In Buddhism, *nirvana* has aspects of “moral, psychological, metaphysical, and spiritual levels.”<sup>194</sup> These aspects construct *nirvana* as “the decision to abandon desire, [and] embracing the Dharma [The Way of The Truth] ... being free of selfish desire [and] the peaceful letting go and the letting be ... the absolute condition beyond the transient nature of human existence ... [and] experience of enlightenment beyond desire.”<sup>195</sup> *Nirvana* does not refer to a specific place; rather, nirvana pinpoints the inner process of letting go of selfishness as the way of self-liberation.

Self-liberation in Buddhism rejects “a personal self, soul, or ego as the basis of identity.”<sup>196</sup> This rejection is “because of the problem of impermanence, and because of the way in which selfhood can be used socially to benefit some while enslaving others.”<sup>197</sup> Teasdale highlights that the rejection of the self is “as much political and social as philosophical.”<sup>198</sup> In other words, there is no place to put oneself higher than others. The notion of no-self refers to the consciousness of emptiness as “the matrix of interconnectedness of all beings” that leads to inward and outward compassion for other

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193. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 57.

194. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 57.

195. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 57-8.

196. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 59.

197. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 60.

198. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 60.

creatures.<sup>199</sup> Through *shunyata* a person makes a space for others and accepts them. The self in Buddhism should be understood in the notion of nothingness that creates a respectful relationship with other beings, without being attached to them. At this point consciousness plays an important role, as consciousness allows the self to be empty as the anticipation to the Absolute. *Shunyata* is the true self. In light of spirituality, *the self is no-self* is an *apophatic* instead of *cataphatic* way.

## The Soul

Teasdale highlights how the Christian understanding of the soul was developed by the Church Fathers and Mothers who were influenced by Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle. According to his allegory of the Cave, Plato suggests that the soul is “a ‘prisoner’ of the body” which is shackled by the iron chains inside the cave.<sup>200</sup> Unfortunately, the souls “do not know that they are prisoners, that they are chained by false knowledge and dwell in the darkness of ignorance.”<sup>201</sup> The prisoners must step out of the cave into the light of day in order to discern the reality of the world. The freed prisoners are “able to perceive how much different indeed the real world is compared to that former shadow world of the prison, and greater even the outside world is compared to the one [the prisoners] knew under the light of the fire inside [the cave].”<sup>202</sup> For Plato, the body by itself is “inanimate, and therefore, when

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199. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 60.

200. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 61; see Plato, *Republic* 484a1 – 511e1. See also *Republic* 517b. Plato, *Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York: The Co-operative Publication Society, 1901), [https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Republic\\_of\\_Plato.html?id=TgG51u81nTgC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp\\_read\\_button#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Republic_of_Plato.html?id=TgG51u81nTgC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false).

201. Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993), 67.

202. Christian Irigaray, “Soma Sema: The Body as a Prison for the Soul,” *Academia*, [https://www.academia.edu/33117741/Soma\\_Sema\\_The\\_Body\\_as\\_a\\_Prison\\_for\\_the\\_Soul](https://www.academia.edu/33117741/Soma_Sema_The_Body_as_a_Prison_for_the_Soul).

it acts or moves, it must be moved by the principle of life, the soul.”<sup>203</sup> In other words, the body may be viewed as only as an undesirable vehicle for the soul. In contrast, Aristotle shifts emphasis to the body in relation to the soul by proposing that “the soul is the substantial form of the body.”<sup>204</sup> Teasdale quotes Aristotle: “The soul must be a substance in the sense of the form of a natural body having potentiality within it. But substance is actuality, and thus soul is the actuality of the body.”<sup>205</sup> This implies a distinction between Plato and Aristotle: whereas Plato focuses on an embodied soul, Aristotle focuses on a souled body. However, both Plato and Aristotle emphasize that “the soul [is] the locus of identity.”<sup>206</sup> This is especially true for Aristotle, as a student of Plato, who sees human existence as best known when the soul is understood as the formal cause of the body.<sup>207</sup>

Augustine modifies Plato’s perspective of soul and body into the church’s view on the value of the body. Augustine’s views were also affected by “the Resurrection doctrine, the Christian doctrine that the human body will rise at the end of the world and live eternally just as Jesus is said to have risen from the dead after his crucifixion.”<sup>208</sup> Augustine combines the soul and the body to describe a human being. Human beings are “immortal soul and use a

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203. Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre*, 63.

204. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 61.

205. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 61-2. See also, Aristotle, *De Anima*, trans. R. D. Hicks (Cambridge: The University Press, 1907), [https://books.google.com/books/about/Aristotle\\_De\\_Anima.html?id=2EkNAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=kp\\_read\\_button#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books/about/Aristotle_De_Anima.html?id=2EkNAAAAIAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false).

206. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 62.

207. There are a variety of interpretations regarding the soul and the body in Plato and Aristotle. Since this section of dissertation on how Teasdale constructed his notion of interspirituality, I do not have the space to discuss the intricacies of Plato and Aristotle.

208. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 62.

mortal body.”<sup>209</sup> The soul and the body are two substances of a human being,<sup>210</sup> but the soul is valued more because the soul is “a simple spiritual substance,” and the soul conducts the body.<sup>211</sup>

In the same way, Thomas Aquinas was influenced by Aristotle’s thought on “the soul as vivifying principle in all things: the principle of life, of movement and activity, and as an intellectual substance with the higher function of contemplating God.”<sup>212</sup> Teasdale highlights that for Aquinas, the intellectual substance<sup>213</sup> or mind expresses “the essence of the soul or selfhood. Contemplation of God is total enjoyment in love, the maturity of a selfless intimacy with the divine in which the person transcends selfishness. It is love. The intellect and the heart are united in knowing the absolute directly.”<sup>214</sup> The unity of the intellect and the heart

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209. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 123.

210. R. A. Markus, “Augustine. Man: Body and Soul,” in *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, ed. A. H. Armstrong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 358. Augustine stressed the substantial unity of body and soul when he stated “my flesh is another substance than my soul.” However, Augustine was also influenced by Manichaen dualism, even though he argued against Manichaen dualism by proposing that body and soul are an integral partnership. In other words, the soul is not complete without the body. See Allan D. Fitzgerald, “Body,” in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 106. Fitzgerald highlights that “Augustine saw the good of body as integral to the good of the soul ... and, with the senses, the body was an image of truth.” Augustine’s perspective on the value of the body stands on the passage: “No one ever hated his own flesh” (Eph. 5:29).

211. Shin, *Concept of the Self*, 124.

212. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 62.

213. Aquinas himself does not use the term *intellectual substance*, but rather *intellective faculty* or power of the soul or mind. The intellective faculty refers to the *passive power* in receiving knowledge and the *active power* reacts to the impression of knowledge. See Paul J. Glenn, “The Intellective Human Faculties,” A Tour of the Summa, CatholicTheology.info, accessed February 16, 2019, <http://www.catholictheology.info/summa-theologica/summa-part1.php?q=529>.

214. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 63.

leads to the basis of infinite life that is God itself. Aquinas tends to unite the mind and the heart of a person with God. For Aquinas, the self is rooted in God.

#### Consciousness and true self

Following the variety of perspectives above (Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity), the basic notion of the self or no-self is that human identity is dynamic rather than static. The dynamic refers to the inner development of the self, which needs consciousness. As Teasdale highlights, “The experience of selfhood, the soul, the Atman, no-self, emptiness, and all the rest demand *consciousness*.”<sup>215</sup> Consciousness becomes “*the locus of identity*” personally and communally.<sup>216</sup> Teasdale proposes the idea of *we are consciousness* not only in the relationship between one-self with other-selves, but also the relationship between the selves with the cosmos.<sup>217</sup> Consciousness is “the inside, outside, nearside, and farside of reality; it is the height, breadth ... transcendent beyond, [and] the locus of all reality.”<sup>218</sup> Consciousness knows reality through “pure intuition and affirms it through pure compassion.”<sup>219</sup> Here consciousness is not only inward process but also outward expression that creates “the community of consciousness.”<sup>220</sup> There is a consciousness movement from personal to communal, where people inhabit the “ultimate community of interconnected being to which we all belong, and from which we have no escape. We inhabit consciousness, and so we *are* this awareness; but we cannot own it for ourselves alone. It belongs to the community of

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215. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 66.

216. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 66. Emphasis added.

217. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 64-5. Emphasis added.

218. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 65-6.

219. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 70.

220. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 66.

consciousness itself. Reality, cosmos, life, and being are one vast system created by and sustained *in* consciousness or mind.”<sup>221</sup> Consciousness means every person is tied one to another, and they become one in consciousness. Consciousness is present beyond boundaries of the self and reality.

Moreover, Teasdale points out “divine consciousness [as] the totality; it is *infinite awareness, compassion, love, and sensitivity* known in an eternal now. It is the mystery of eternity in an infinite awareness of the present moment, the eternal now that has always been and always will be.”<sup>222</sup> This affirms that consciousness is the basis of human identity and the locus of relationship with the divine, whatever a person’s religious traditions. Moreover, this consciousness is compatible with and even necessary for mysticism.

As consciousness is the locus of identity, each person should be aware of the tension between false self and true self in his or her life. What precisely are false self and true self? I refer to Carter Haynes’ analysis on Thomas Merton’s idea of false self and true self. Haynes explains,

The *false self* is egocentric and concerned with meeting its own needs. *True self* is other-focused and finds serenity through releasing the vestiges of egocentrism. The false self is one’s most familiar identity, but is also superficial. It includes thoughts, emotions, personal, role and social awareness. It is possible to reflect upon the false self, but even this introspection is superficial. Merton held that, *in contemplation*, one becomes aware of his or her true self and learns that false self is limited. The false self erects barriers that must be surmounted before the true self can be explored and experienced.<sup>223</sup>

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221. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 66-7.

222. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 70. Emphasis added.

223. Carter Haynes, “Identity, Transcendence and the True Self: Insights from Psychology and Contemplative Spirituality,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 72 (2016): 2, accessed April 13, 2018, doi: 10.4102/hts.v72i4.3455. Emphasis added.



Merton's idea of false self and true self is tied to how self-identity relates to others, beyond his or her personal self. Merton emphasizes being aware or conscious to egoism; this means that the true self exists in each person but he or she needs to discover it. Merton highlights "the deep transcendent self that ... awakens only in contemplation ... [because] superficial 'I' is not [the] real self."<sup>224</sup> True self is characterized by self-transcendence in which a person can be and do beyond his or her self. Consciousness is the source of true self because self-transcendence must be created. Self-transcendence is "*the doorway* from the false self to true self."<sup>225</sup> The growth of true self draws toward the understanding of holiness as Susan Rakoczy quotes Merton: "I must see and embrace God in the whole world."<sup>226</sup> True self is about holiness, and holiness is not out of the world but in the world, and it requires not exclusiveness but inclusiveness. James Finley, who expands on Merton's thought, highlights that "true self is a self 'in love'" through daily life and interaction with others. True self as self-transcendence is about life integration.<sup>227</sup>

For Teasdale, consciousness allows a person to cultivate "the nature of sanctity, or holiness."<sup>228</sup> Teasdale refers to Bede Griffiths, his *guru*, who explains that "sanctity is being aware of how much we are conditioned by ego."<sup>229</sup> Griffiths reminds people to be aware of their inner self, which tends to be self-centered. A life journey should move from self-

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224. Thomas Merton, *The New Seeds of Contemplation* (1961; repr., New York: A New Directions Book, 2007), 7.

225. Haynes, "Identity," 2. Emphasis added.

226. Susan Rakoczy, "Thomas Merton: The True Self and the Quest for Justice," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 72 (2016): 4, accessed April 15, 2018, doi: 10.4102/hts.v72i4.3447.

227. James Finley, *Merton's Palace of Nowhere* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2017), 64.

228. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 108.

229. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 108.

centeredness to other-centeredness, where love drives life. The holiness or sanctity of life becomes practical relationships with others. As an example, Teasdale offers Mother Teresa's response when a journalist asked her why she took care of the poorest of the poor who were dying on the streets of Calcutta. Based on her deep self-knowledge, Mother Teresa replied, "I realized a long time ago that I had a Hitler within me."<sup>230</sup> Teasdale highlights that Mother Teresa's response shows "the basis of her self-transcendence and of her unique holiness."<sup>231</sup> Mother Teresa realized the power of the false self, but she processed her true self and transformed it into the contemplative service for the poorest of the poor in Calcutta and beyond. Her vocation was her true self. True self is one of the mystic characteristics. Likewise, Merton says, "For me *to be a saint means to be myself*. Therefore the problem of sanctity and salvation is in fact the problem of finding out who I am and of discovering *my true self*."<sup>232</sup> Both Teasdale and Merton emphasize that sanctity or holiness is not a state of life but a way of self-transcendence that expresses true self. This is through consciousness, which is the source for true self and where authenticity can be found. On this point, holiness does not mean separation from human existence or distancing oneself from the world, but rather becoming one's true self and embracing the reality of life. Holiness is not facing God and neglecting the world. Bernard McGinn stresses that "the pursuit of the divine mystery does not remove us from the world of space and time, but makes us ever more conscious of the intersection of time and eternity."<sup>233</sup> In light of intermysticism, Teasdale affirms,

We inhabit consciousness, and so we are this awareness; but we cannot own it for ourselves alone. It belongs to the community of consciousness itself ...

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230. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 109.

231. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 109.

232. Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, 31. Emphasis added.

233. Bernard McGinn, *The Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism* (New York: The Modern Library, 2006), xviii.

We look out onto the world, others, nature, and the universe through our unique perspective, but we exist within a regional awareness: the human race, with its highly developed and various forms of culture.<sup>234</sup>

For Teasdale, consciousness is integral to the self of each person, and people are united in consciousness in responding to life. When each person becomes aware and overcome by consciousness, that person's "subtle awareness becomes a healing, loving, compassionate being."<sup>235</sup> Consciousness is not about feelings, as many people assume, but about being and doing in which "all kinds of transformative, contemplative [and] mystical stages of awareness [are] subtle forms of consciousness."<sup>236</sup> Finally, influenced by religious traditions and perspectives from the East and West, Teasdale defines human identity: "*The self, the soul, the human identity is a community of consciousness individually appropriated and known.*"<sup>237</sup> Human beings are united in "a corporate self" in the life journey.<sup>238</sup>

### ***The Mystical Heart and Social Engagement***

#### **Infinite consciousness**

As I described above, for Teasdale, consciousness plays an important role not only for personal life but also for communal life, which leads to the understanding: *we are consciousness* as human beings, in identity and social engagement. Consciousness serves as "the foundation of everything" that unifies the cosmos.<sup>239</sup> Consciousness is about relation and

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234. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 67.

235. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 209.

236. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 71.

237. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 75. Italics are original.

238. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 75.

239. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 75.

integration. Teasdale stresses that “*each one of us achieves the divine totality of consciousness*. The spiritual journey is essentially one of discovering the roots of our identity; it is a process of returning to that totality of consciousness from which we have arisen.”<sup>240</sup> There is a link between consciousness, the divine, and spirituality in the human journey. The divine has a universal existence that goes beyond all recognitions: “the totality, the source, the spirit, the Tao, God, the ground of being, the ultimate reality, the ultimate mystery, the nameless one, Yahweh, Allah...there are countless other names for this being.”<sup>241</sup> Teasdale mentions that the divine is “*infinite consciousness*.”<sup>242</sup> As *infinite consciousness*, the divine is “the everlasting light of awareness that is in all, behind all, beyond all, and intimate to all.”<sup>243</sup> This notion draws to panentheism<sup>244</sup> as “theophatic awareness.”<sup>245</sup> Panentheism means “All things reveal the divine because all things are in God, in the divine consciousness; they exist

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240. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 75. Emphasis added.

241. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 76.

242. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 76. Emphasis added.

243. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 76.

244. Panentheism should not be confused with pantheism. Fox states, “Pantheism, which is a declared heresy because it robs God of transcendence, states that ‘everything is God and God is everything.’ Panentheism, on the other hand, is altogether orthodox and very fit for orthopraxis as well, for it slips in the little Greek word *en* and this means, ‘God is in everything and everything is in God.’ This experience of the presence of God in our depth and of Dabhar [God’s creative energy] in all the blessings and sufferings of life is a mystical understanding of God. Panentheism is desperately needed by individuals and religious institutions today. It is the way the creation-centered tradition of spirituality experiences God. It is not theistic because it does not relate to God as subject or object, but neither is it pantheistic. Panentheism is a way of seeing the world sacramentally.” Matthew Fox, *Original Blessing: A Primer in Creation Spirituality* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Company, 1983), 90. Second and third italics are mine.

245. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 199

in [God], and [God] is likewise in them.”<sup>246</sup> The divine is present in this world, in the perpetual here and now.

No single person can claim that he or she, along with his or her fellow, is the only one to have precious access to the divine. Panentheism is about “mapping relationships: between the self and the world, between the self and God, and between God and the world.”<sup>247</sup> Loriliai Biernacki stresses that “panentheism encourages a pluralistic appreciation of other traditions, and as such, panentheism as a model is eminently suited to interfaith dialogue.”<sup>248</sup> There is a link between panentheism and the *infinite consciousness* because both are beyond a restrictive doctrine of a religion. Consciousness is “the divine itself.”<sup>249</sup> Matthew Fox stresses, “The sacramental consciousness of panentheism develops into a transparent and diaphanous consciousness wherein we can see events and beings are divine. The Good News and the Bad News bear divine grace.”<sup>250</sup> Panentheism emphasizes the omnipresence of God without the dualistic understanding of God as *here* or *there*, limited by place, time, or event. In human beings’ lives, they can “truly enter into the deep with-ness of God” in any experience.<sup>251</sup> This refers to a mystical consciousness which is available to everyone who opens him or herself to the *infinite consciousness*. The ability to be a mystic is available to everyone because the self as the subject is consciousness and the mystical experience is about

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246. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 199.

247. Loriliai Biernacki, “Panentheism Outside the Box,” in *Panentheism across the World’s Traditions*, ed. Loriliai Biernacki and Philip Clayton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 6.

248. Biernacki, “Panentheism,” 6.

249. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 243,

250. Fox, *Original Blessing*, 90.

251. Fox, *Original Blessing*, 92.

totality. No matter what his or her traditions, a person can be a mystic as long as he or she unifies his or her presence here and now with others and all creation.

For Teasdale, panentheism upholds interspirituality because panentheism promotes interconnectedness of the entire cosmos. Teasdale states Griffiths' observation that "the revelation of ultimate Truth, given to all mankind through the Cosmos, that is, through the Creation."<sup>252</sup> Creation is about relation among human being and human living. This is in line with Fox and his notion on creation spirituality. Fox proposes that creation is "the mother of all beings and the father of all beings [and] original blessing."<sup>253</sup> The original blessing becomes the theological basis for communal living, replacing the doctrine of biblical text, original sin. The original blessing or the original innocence relies on the text of Genesis 1 and 2, instead of Genesis 3, which is used in the doctrine of original sin. The original blessing evokes human beings to see the world in positive and passionate perspective in nurturing life. The original blessing becomes the conduct of human beings with the cosmos in the relationship of microcosm and macrocosm. Creation spirituality or "mystical panentheism" reminds people of the mutual or interdependent relationship of life.<sup>254</sup>

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252. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 176.

253. Fox, *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), 12-3. Fox points out Creation spirituality as a tradition and a movement. A tradition refers to the ancient traditions in the East and West. A movement implies social relationship. Creation spirituality has four paths: "the *Via Positiva*, the *Via Negativa*, the *Via Creativa*, and the *Via Transformativa*," (17-26). The *Via Positiva* is a mystical journey of awe, wonder, and falling in love. The *Via Negativa* pinpoints the mystical journey of "the dark night of the soul" which is a reminder of the divine presence in the darkness as well as in the light. The *Via Creativa* refers to the *imago Dei* as the co-creator in bringing the demonic side and the angelic side into harmony. The *Via Transformativa* is an invitation journey of compassion through consciousness in empowering the capacity of interconnectedness between God, humans, and the world. *Via Transformativa* identifies this interdependence as the realm of creation.

254. Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, 104.

In light of interspirituality, creation spirituality notes that God passionately creates diversity because “God is ‘the passionate One.’”<sup>255</sup> Creation spirituality offers “an avenue of grace by sounding an end to internalized oppression, shame, and self-hatred. We are not here to bemoan our existence, to blame ourselves or others, or to wallow in our sinfulness. Rather, we are here *to return blessing for blessing* and to give back to the larger community.”<sup>256</sup> Creation spirituality is a mystical way of society with goals: “compassion, justice, and harmony.”<sup>257</sup> Creation spirituality teaches *infinite consciousness* by a deep respect for someone or something through creative interaction.

The *infinite consciousness*, or the divine, enlightens human beings so that they can walk with others in “compassion, sensitivity, and love” with the spirit of freedom following the way of the divine’s freedom in embracing the world.<sup>258</sup> This is a spiritual journey where “the active and contemplative are integrated within each person’s consciousness ... no separation between inner and outer exists.”<sup>259</sup> When a person lives in the *infinite consciousness*, he or she will integrate contemplation and action; they are united, for, as Thomas Aquinas said in his *Summa Theologiae*, “mystical contemplation [as the operation of wisdom] terminates in God himself and not in the divine effects; therefore it is not an explication of faith, since it is not discursive, but acting through charity.”<sup>260</sup> Contemplation

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255. Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, 35.

256. Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, 37. Emphasis added.

257. Fox, *Creation Spirituality*, 47.

258. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 77.

259. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 96.

260. St. Thomas Aquinas, “Action and Contemplation,” in *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Jordan Aumann, vol. 46 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 107. See also glossary entry on *contemplation*: “intuitive knowledge accompanied by joy; may be natural or supernatural, acquired or infused,” page 125.

and charity are interdependent and they are expressed concretely. Richard Rohr, a Franciscan, affirms that “[a]ction without contemplation is the work of hamsters and gerbils. It gets you through the day, it gives you a temporary sense of movement, but the world is not made new by spinning wheels going nowhere ... Contemplation without action is *certainly* not contemplation at all.”<sup>261</sup> Moreover, Rohr reminds his readers that the interconnectedness of contemplation and action in practice is complex as he quotes Jaime Cardinal Sin of Manila’s statement: “Strength without compassion is violence, compassion without justice is weakness, justice without love is totalitarianism, and charity without justice is baloney!”<sup>262</sup> Action in contemplation and contemplation in action require a deep presence in the midst of human struggles.

Teasdale stresses that “mysticism is a liberating movement in humankind’s experience and history.”<sup>263</sup> Consciousness as “the ground of being” and the core of mystical life empowers social engagement through contemplative processes along a spiritual life journey.<sup>264</sup> Teasdale firmly argues, “Genuine spirituality always expresses itself in action for others. *A viable spirituality today is socially engaged*; it does not turn its back on the sufferings of the world, but squarely faces them and contributes to their mitigation and alleviation.”<sup>265</sup> Spirituality is not focusing on only the spirit in a sense of antagonism with the

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261. Richard Rohr et al., *Grace in Action* (New York: Crossroad, 1994), xiv-xv. Richard Rohr is the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

262. Rohr et al., *Grace in Action*, 5.

263. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 102.

264. Celia Kourie, “Weaving Colorful Threads: A Tapestry of Spirituality and Mysticism,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 71 (2015): 5, accessed October 6, 2016, doi: 10.4102/hts.v71i1.3023.

265. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 147-8. Emphasis added.



material or physical presence. Instead, spirituality immerses itself deeply in humanity in all of its totalities: spiritual, physical, and social.

### Three elements of the mystical heart

In light of interspirituality, Teasdale emphasizes the role of “humankind’s *inner evolution*” in the work of the mystic heart as the way of spirituality into the reality of life.<sup>266</sup> Teasdale proposes three universal elements of the spirituality of action as the inner process of a mystic: “simplicity of life, selfless service, and the prophetic or moral voice.”<sup>267</sup> Teasdale uses the term “universal elements” because these three elements are found in all religious traditions. These elements utilize the fruits of mystical life within “the sphere of social concerns, and demands of compassion and love in active society.”<sup>268</sup> Surely, there is no dichotomy between mysticism and social concern, and there is vital interdependence between action and contemplation.

The first universal element is *simplicity of life*. Simplicity of life is “a way of focusing our attention on what is absolutely essential; it goes to the core of our being and strips away all the distractions that compete for our attention.”<sup>269</sup> As an inner path, simplicity relates to an engagement of the personal life in the world. Simplicity of heart and life require “an appreciation of insecurity, vulnerability, marginality, and detachment, which a certain experience of material poverty facilitates. There is no ‘upper-class,’ ‘middle-class,’ or ‘lower-class’ spirituality. There is only the summons to transformations as part of human experience,

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266. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 10. Emphasis added.

267. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 148.

268. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 148.

269. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 150.

and its requirements are universal.”<sup>270</sup> The insights of simplicity show that simplicity is an interior journey that expresses in a humble person and concrete presence among others. Simplicity has been a part of mystics’ lives over the centuries, and it has been a virtue and an energy for mystics, such as Rābi’a al-‘Adawiyya and Mother Teresa.

Rābi’a al-‘Adawiyya (d. 801) was a Muslim Sufi woman, also known as Rābi’a of Baṣra, Iraq. Her life experience, as a freedwoman and a former slave, shapes her simplicity of heart in her mystical union with God through mystical practices: “*tawakul* (the absolute trust-in-God); *riḍā* (complete acceptance of the lot willed for one by the deity to the point of refusing prayer as petition, since one’s own will has been merged with that of the divine will); *faqr* (absolute poverty).”<sup>271</sup> One of her prayers shows a total surrender: “O Lord, if I worship you out of fear of hell, burn me in hell. If I worship you in the hope of paradise, forbid it to me. And if I worship you for your own sake, do not deprive me of your eternal beauty.”<sup>272</sup> These mystical practices demonstrate her integrity in life with God and others through a simple way of living.

Mother Teresa (1910-1997) was a Catholic nun who devoted her life and service for nearly fifty years the poorest of the poor in Calcutta, India. Mother Teresa affirms, “We are not social workers. We are really contemplatives in the heart of the world ... We have twenty-four hours in His presence, you, and I ... We are twenty-four hours with Jesus in the hungry, in the naked, in the homeless, in the lonely.”<sup>273</sup> This affirmation shows the mystical way of Mother Teresa and the Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity as a social engagement

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270. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 150.

271. Michael A. Sells, ed., *Early Islamic Mysticism: Sufi, Qur’an, Mi’raj, Poetic and Theological Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 154.

272. Sells, *Early Islamic Mysticism*, 169.

273. Mother Teresa, *Where There is Love, There is God*, ed. Brian Kolodiejchuck (New York: Doubleday, 2010), 213-4.

through simplicity of life and radical poverty. I will explore Mother Teresa comprehensively in Chapter 4.

The second universal element is *selfless service*. Selfless service is not easy to practice in the post-modern life-style because individualism is over-emphasized, which leads to difficulty in maintaining an openness to service which is an essential part of genuine spirituality. Teasdale stresses, “To be selflessly available to others, to respond to them in a loving, compassionate way—not a sentimental love, but an unconditional, self-sacrificing presence—is a sign of great spiritual and human maturity.”<sup>274</sup> Joan Wolski Conn stresses that “spiritual maturity is a deep and inclusive love. It is the loving relationship to God and others born of struggle to discern where and how God is present in community, in ministry, in suffering, in religious and political dissension, and in one’s own sinfulness.”<sup>275</sup> Mature spirituality is expressed in relationship. The compassionate service to others is part of spiritual formation that “always includes responding from the heart to the needs of the poor in a spirit of true compassion.”<sup>276</sup> Selfless service is not only a practice but also a spiritual journey of a mystic because while a mystic serves others, a mystic is developing his or her own spirit of selflessness. For mystics, such as St. Francis of Assisi and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, this is the way of freedom.

St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), a native of Italy, was the founder of the first Franciscan order. In the ecclesiastical principalities and holy wars (crusades) of the twelfth century, St. Francis radically returns to the Gospel. This was a critique of Church life in that century. He rediscovers the image of God. Behind feudal dress and dominant power is

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274. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 154.

275. Joann Wolski Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 16.

276. Henri J. M. Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), xxvi.

“God’s humbleness, God’s humanity. Not merely as an object of devotion, but as a new principle on which to reconstruct society.”<sup>277</sup> For St. Francis, if a person recognizes the God of the Gospel, he or she will not be satisfied with a social organization. The only agent that can transform social life is human relationship through true brotherhood and sisterhood in daily life. St. Francis emphasizes that possessions and wealth often choke compassion for others as he proposes, “If we had any possessions we should be forced to have arms to protect them, since possessions are a cause of disputes and strife, and in many ways we should be hindered from loving God and our neighbor. Therefore, in this life, we wish to have no temporal possessions.”<sup>278</sup> St. Francis and his fellows lived in the spirit of poverty through labor and service to the poor and the sick, especially those with leprosy.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram (1892-1962), a Javanese mystic, was a prince of the *kraton* (palace) of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Javanese mysticism or *kejawen* is influenced by Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, especially Sufism. While he was a prince, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram struggled with the essence of true self when he reflected on the people who lived inside and outside the palace. His fundamental contemplative statement was “[aku] ora tahu kepethuk uwong,” meaning “I did not see a human being.”<sup>279</sup> By being an ordinary person and living outside the palace, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram gained an insight of self-knowledge which is called *Kawruh Jiwa*. The purpose of *Kawruh Jiwa* is finding a genuine happiness which does “not depend on time, place, and situation (*mboten gumantung wekdal*,

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277. Eloi Leclerc, *Francis of Assisi: Return to the Gospel* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), ix.

278. John Michael Talbot and Steve Rabey, *The Lessons of St. Francis: How to Bring Simplicity and Spirituality into Your Daily Life* (New York: Plume Book, 1997), 20.

279. Ki Prasetyo Atmosutidjo, “Upaya ‘Mencari Kebahagiaan’ and Membebaskan Diri dari Belenggu ‘Bangsa Konsumen,’” in *Psikologi Raos: Saintifikasi Kawruh Jiwa Ki Ageng Suryomentaram*, ed. Ryan Sugiarto (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ifada, 2015), xix.

*papan, lan kawontenan).*”<sup>280</sup> *Kawruh Jiwa* is a personal way for humanity to build community beyond borders. I will thoroughly analyze Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in Chapter 5.

The third universal element is *prophetic voice*. The prophetic voice refers to a resistance against injustice to human beings and the entire cosmos. Speaking out is an action that has “a direct relationship to the intensity of the inner life in the mystical journey. The depth and quality of spiritual life grants the courage, wisdom, perspective, and moral clarity to confront, nonviolently, evil with the truth.”<sup>281</sup> Teasdale emphasizes deep nonviolence as part of the prophetic voice and action because

When the spiritual life has put down deep roots, there is a natural, organic evolution into deep nonviolence: the attitude and practice of non-harming ... A commitment to deep nonviolence is necessary to the emerging global culture, and to interspirituality. Nonviolence adjusts our external actions to our inner attitudes, and makes them consistent with compassion and the demands of love.<sup>282</sup>

Prophetic voice is an expression of resistance to the injustices of reality, and the resistance itself has to be grounded in nonviolence because without that grounding, the resistance will be a new form of injustice that will destroy the preciousness of life. Resistance through violence is not the soul of the mystics, because “the mystical foundation of the life [is] ‘desire life in the midst of other life.’”<sup>283</sup> Mysticism rises from specific social contexts, and mysticism is always a response from the inside to the outside. Dorothee Soelle uses an analogy: “[mysticism] begins with our not being at home in this world of business and

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280. Atmosutidjo, “*Upaya Mencari*”, xxi. Italics are original.

281. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 160.

282. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 116-7.

283. Dorothee Soelle, *The Silent Cry: Mysticism and Resistance* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 263.

violence.”<sup>284</sup> This disconnection prompts resistance and the resulting mysticism, as “resistance is not the outcome of mysticism, resistance is mysticism itself.”<sup>285</sup> A prophetic voice as resistance is not simply sending a message; rather, a prophetic voice is a deep spiritual journey leading to mysticism, as seen in Mahatma Gandhi and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), as a Hindu Indian mystic, was focused on *satyagraha* (Truth) and *Ahimsa* (Non-violence) for social transformation. Both *satyagraha* and *Ahimsa* become political actions as Gandhi says, “Non-violence is the greatest force man has been endowed with. Truth is the only goal he has. For God is none other than Truth. But Truth cannot be, never will be, reached except through non-violence ... Non-violence is a weapon of the strong.”<sup>286</sup> For Gandhi, *satyagraha* and *Ahimsa* are two sides of the same coin. These are prophetic voices which manifest into a way of life:

[T]rue *satyagrahi* is not afraid of entering any conflict for sake of those around him [or her], without hostility, without resentment, without resorting even to violent words. Even in the face of the fiercest provocation, he [or she] never lets himself [or herself] forget that he [or she] and his [or her] attackers are one. This is *ahimsa*, which is more than just the absence of violence; it is intense love.<sup>287</sup>

The inner evolution of a mystic is the basic foundation for revolutionary action in society.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a German Lutheran theologian who was executed by Adolf Hitler. Bonhoeffer proposes that life together as a church community is “sacramental,” but he examines the meaning of the sacrament in the midst of the

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284. Soelle, *Silent Cry*, 197.

285. Soelle, *Silent Cry*, 199.

286. Mahatma Gandhi, *The Essential Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, ed. Raghavan Iyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 240, 243.

287. Eknath Easwaran, *Gandhi the Man: How One Man Changed Himself to Change the World* (Tomes, CA: Nilgiri Press, 2011), 73. Emphasis added.

Holocaust.<sup>288</sup> For Bonhoeffer, the church has a theological perspective on Christ's salvation as cheap grace, rather than following costly grace by risking one's life as a dedicated follower of Christ. This perspective causes the church to do nothing against the abusive power of the Nazis. In his letter from prison, Bonhoeffer writes,

“Jesus is there only for others.” His “being there for others” is the experience of transcendence. It is only this “being there for others,” maintained till death, that is the ground of his *omnipotence*, *omniscience*, and *omnipresence*. Our relation to God is not a “religious” relationship to the highest, most powerful, and best Being imaginable—that is not authentic transcendence—but our relation to God is a new life in “existence for others,” through participation in the being of Jesus.<sup>289</sup>

Bonhoeffer stresses that being a Christian is not only being devoted to Jesus but also following Jesus in His way of being with others. It is discipleship which manifests into concrete action for the value of humanity, even through resistance. Bonhoeffer proposes a radical perspective of *the church for others* which means “a new form of Christian humanism,” as a critique to the status quo of the German Protestant church in the midst of the Holocaust.<sup>290</sup>

These three universal elements of mystical life for interspirituality confirm the interwovenness between the mystical heart and social engagement in which a person, as a mystic, becomes the center of the cosmos. The mystic experiences inner contemplation and outer transformation, grounded in love, compassion, wisdom. This is due to “*mystics [being] ‘beyond morality’* ... because the whole aim of ethics and laws is only fully achieved by the person who achieves an inner transformation in which they now act from love, compassion,

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288. Wayne Whitson Floyd, *The Wisdom and Witness of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011), 15.

289. Floyd, *Wisdom and Witness*, 88. Emphasis added.

290. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. Christian Gremmenls et al. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1996), 29.

mercy, and kindness.”<sup>291</sup> Moreover, Teasdale adds that “the meaning of ethics naturally extends beyond simply avoiding certain attitudes and actions ... *It becomes part of the consciousness of the individual mystics, and not something external imposed by society.*”<sup>292</sup> Mystical life is not conforming to the moral conducts of society as a standard of being moral, but an authenticity or a personal vocation of life. Mystical life is the union of the mystical heart and social engagement, which together create a genuine spirituality which is “*relevant, revolutionary, [and] transforming.*”<sup>293</sup> Even though a mystic’s life may seem strange and radical, it is genuine.

#### Mystic: The final integration

In the notion of interspirituality, Teasdale affirms the mystical heart through a contemplative way due to the inner maturity of the mystic. Contemplation is “the capacity to know the divine and oneself in intimate relationship with it beyond the finite and the impermanent. The interiority of contemplative awareness is *a process of simplification and clarification of the self* that prepare the individual for union with God, integration with the absolute.”<sup>294</sup> To be a mystic, it is required to have a clear and healthy identity. Even though mystics may experience human struggles during their life journeys, their self-image restoration must come first, before the restoration of the image of humanity. In line with Teasdale, Curtiss Paul Deyoung proposes that without self-restorative processes, mystics

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291. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 112. Emphasis added.

292. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 112.

293. M. Robert Mulholland Jr., *Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1993), 161.

294. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 238. Emphasis added.



easily become “the next oppressors.”<sup>295</sup> Deyoung emphasizes, “[The mystics] infected by dominant-culture privileges—even when they have deep, intimate relationships with persons who have experienced oppression in society—need to embrace the fact that healing is a long-term process.”<sup>296</sup> Self-healing of their own identity is a part of the transformation in the mystics’ lives. The mystics’ lives become an example for the victims of injustice in how to forgive, how to recognize and to restore their own and humanity as well as that of others, that the people who did injustice are also human beings.

Clarification of the self plays a fundamental role in mystical life because it draws a mystic to be present in the *final integration*. On this point, Teasdale refers to Merton on the idea of a person as the center of the cosmos:

*Final integration* is a state of transcultural maturity far beyond mere social adjustment, which always implies partiality and compromise. The person who is “fully born” has an entirely “inner experience of life.” Such a one apprehends his [or her] life fully and wholly from an inner ground that is at once more universal than the empirical ego and yet entirely his [or her] own. Such an individual is in a certain sense “cosmic” and “universal person” ... He [or she] is in a certain sense identified with everybody ...

[ ... ]

[F]inal integration implies an “openness,” a “poverty” similar to those described in such detail not only by the Rhenish mystics,<sup>297</sup> by St. John of the Cross, by the early Franciscans, but also by the Sufis, the early Taoist masters and Zen Buddhists ... The person who has attained *final integration* is no longer limited by the culture in which he [or she] has grown up ... He [or she] accepts not only his [or her] own community, his [or her] own society, his [or her] own friends, his [or her] own culture, but all humankind ... He [or she] does not set these partial views up in opposition to each other, but unifies them in a dialectic or an insight of complementarity.<sup>298</sup>

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295. Curtiss Paul Deyoung, *Living Faith: How Faith Inspires Social Justice* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 98.

296. Deyoung, *Living Faith*, 99.

297. “Rhenish mystics” refers to German mystics in the late medieval era, particularly in the Dominican order, such as Hildegard von Bingen, Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler, etc. See also, Richard Wood, “Rhineland Mystics,” *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Philip Sheldrake, 543-6.

298. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 231-232. Emphasis added. See Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 206-7.

*Final integration* becomes the inner journey with a series of capacities: “openness, presence, listening, being, seeing, spontaneity, and joy” beyond boundaries of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion or belief, etc.<sup>299</sup> Indeed, interspirituality is about the final integration of life. This is a calling for the spiritual journey to become a mystic; “[e]very one is a mystic.”<sup>300</sup> The mystical heart is available to everyone. However, Teasdale reminds readers that interspirituality faces a problem from “conservative members of faiths who are firmly entrenched in their traditions.”<sup>301</sup> Such members rely on issues of exclusive identity.

Meanwhile, interspirituality proposes an inclusive identity in the midst of intersection between the Ultimate Reality and the variety of humankind’s entity. Teasdale points out:

*Only the mystic* can attain this *final integration* because all wisdom and insight is available to them. The perspective [the mystics] gain is the result of their inner freedom, and this freedom leads them to a transcultural or universal understanding in which they can embrace all. *Only the mystics* can be truly interspiritual, since in the end it is a matter of spiritual practice. Depth seeks depth ... Mystics are heralds of the Interspiritual Age, in which all of humankind’s wisdom will be gathered up and shared as in a common tradition ... By realizing that this diversity of tradition and approach is willed by God, the mystic becomes the guardian of interspirituality.<sup>302</sup>

The inclusive identity of a mystic who experiences the final integration in the medium of communal consciousness or *we are consciousness* creates the intermystic as the sharing of the self with the selves of other persons. Interspirituality needs the personal inner life commitment for community building based on universal mysticism. Interspirituality or

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299. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 244.

300. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 243.

301. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 178.

302. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 232-3. Emphasis added.

intermysticism is about mature self-knowledge, values, and relationships. The mystics become the channel of harmony and peace for humanity.

## The Relevance of Interspirituality in Indonesia

### *A Contemplative Way*

Interspirituality promotes a new way of living harmoniously for Indonesia as a pluralistic country by shifting focus from doctrine to the inner evolution of the self. This must be done without neglecting the treasure of spiritual traditions or local wisdoms, instead nurturing their intersection for life. The *inner evolution* of the self as applied to Indonesians, and more specifically, this dissertation's focus on Javanese tradition, and the Javanese notion of *rasa* (the intuitive inner feeling). For Javanese, *rasa* is not a feeling that emphasizes emotions while neglecting thinking. Rather, *rasa* refers to the holistic being that gives impact to doing, through the integration of both heart and mind. *Rasa* is the genuine *guru* of life where the Ultimate Reality dwells in a person who becomes aware of his or her life's journey by activating the *rasa* or *olah rasa* (training of the *rasa*). *Rasa* is identical to consciousness, which is the divine itself. The inner evolution through consciousness or *rasa* is a Javanese contemplative way for each person to build a communal consciousness. As interspirituality emphasizes the notion *we are consciousness*, *rasa* shapes communal life through *rasa liyan* (paying attention to the *rasa* of others). This inner evolution creates a social life in relation to the universal self as a natural meeting of human beings. The idea *we are consciousness* is in line with the Asian philosophy of communal life: unity and harmony. *Rasa liyan* creates a commitment to live in harmonious diversity and to unite as brothers and sisters. Interspirituality is in line with the national motto of Indonesia: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*

(Sanskrit) meaning “Unity in Diversity.” Interspirituality offers a contemplative way to be Indonesian beyond the diversity of religion, ethnicity, and race.

Indonesia is a religious country but not a country with a state religion. This is because of the democratic system based on *Pancasila* (the five principles) as *Dasar Negara* (the foundation of state philosophy). *Pancasila* is in line with the nature of interspirituality, as it values the variety of religious or belief traditions and local wisdom as spiritual treasures. These spiritual treasures belong to the whole community through the community’s adoption of eagerness and openness, and become the seeds of communal spiritual growth for nourishing humanity. Interspirituality draws Indonesians to go beyond their own religions or beliefs and have a mystical journey into the realm of the Ultimate Reality. The first of the five principles of *Pancasila*: *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (Divinity is one God) leans toward the idea of Godhead rather than God. It does not refer to God’s name, which would belong to a particular religion, but is applied to religion universally. *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* is comparable with the *infinite consciousness*. Thus, the first principle of *Pancasila* becomes the doorway for Indonesians to go beyond interreligious dialogue *into* interspirituality. Becoming Indonesians religiously is through interspirituality.

### ***A Transformative Way***

The goal of interspirituality is not to create a homogenous super-spirituality but to build an Interspiritual Age for peaceful living through the adoption of openness among people. The essences of interspirituality are “substantial, vital, and creative.”<sup>303</sup> Interspirituality is substantial because it relates to self-identity, both personally and communally. It is about human beings. Interspirituality is vital because it furthers the

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303. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 26.

continuity of humanity in the midst of a fragile world, fraught with deteriorative actions. Interspirituality is creative because it goes beyond the boundaries of religion, belief, ethnicity, wisdom, culture, gender, etc.

Interspirituality will give a new consciousness (again) for Indonesians to live peacefully in a diverse nation. This is a nation in which, over the last decade, *Wahhabism* has spread rapidly through the archipelago, claiming itself to be the truest of religion and practicing violence as a devoted way of Islam. At this point, interspirituality coheres with the idea of *Islam Nusantara* which I explained in Chapter 1. Since *Islam Nusantara* is the original Islam of Indonesia and values local wisdoms and emphasizes tolerance of other religions or beliefs. *Islam Nusantara* is in line with interspirituality, which is rooted in a mutual acceptance of diverse religious traditions and local wisdom as treasures for life. Interspirituality will be a new approach for Indonesia that *is* the multicultural and multireligious home where humanity is valued beyond borders.

*Final integration* as the core of the mystical journey of interspirituality fits within Javanese mysticism, as a part of my dissertation, which rests on the harmonious cosmological paradigm of *jagad cilik* (micro cosmos) and *jagad gedhe* (macro cosmos), and the balanced relationship of *lahir* (outward or corporeal dimension) and *batin* (inner dimension).<sup>304</sup> This affirms that a cosmological paradigm *is* creation spirituality, which emphasizes the interconnectedness between human beings and other living beings for a transformative life. This transformative way will teach Indonesians how to live pluralistically in peace. Both interspirituality and Javanese mysticism focus on the awareness of subjectivity for self-transcendence. Both interspirituality and Javanese mysticism strive to involve human beings in daily life and affirm that mysticism is not world-denying but social engagement. Both

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304. Javanese and Indonesian languages are influenced by Sanskrit and Arabic.

interspirituality and Javanese mysticism exist due to a quality of human beings in social life through benevolence and beneficence as the true love. This means that being a mystic is available for everyone.

## Conclusion

The quotation in the introduction of this chapter: “Interspirituality is cosmically open,” stresses passing through the interconnectedness of living into mystery, in which human consciousness takes a fundamental role in responding that the world of life is sacred.<sup>305</sup> The Ultimate Reality dwells in the whole reality of life without bringing limitless God into an individual’s personal understanding. Interspirituality is not religious knowledge but a spiritual tolerance for living with other beings. Interspirituality offers an alternative way of living in opposition to the radical apocalyptic hope that is found in religions, expressed through intolerance, violence, and destroying the world of life before moving to heaven (as a place). In light of a Javanese wisdom, *Gusti ora sare* meaning “God is not sleeping,” interspirituality affirms the omnipresence of God in the reality of life. God is not absent, but is here and now on the earth in all circumstances. Interspirituality is about the endurance of life through personal and communal consciousness where mystical contemplation transforms daily life as Jürgen Moltmann says: “*There is no mysticism of the soul without the mysticism of sociality.*”<sup>306</sup> Interspirituality is a holistic life, beyond the walls of religious houses, and makes the world the home of humanity.

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305. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 240.

306. Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 94. Emphasis added.

Interspirituality determines the true self, consciousness, and the final integration of life due to self-transcendence. Self-transcendence is the core of interspirituality. To develop Teasdale's notion of interspirituality, I will employ Bernard Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence which is based on the empirical, lived experience of the self as a *subject* instead of a doctrine. A subject plays an important role for genuine objectivity or the objectivity of truth which is not laid on a set of doctrinal formulas as a product of certain times and places. Rather, it is an ongoing process of a subject through intentional consciousness within his or her lived experience. I will discuss this in more detail in Chapters 3 and 6.

“While the great religions, in their respective beliefs and practices, have been isolated from one another, at their core they share a deeper dimension. This is the common ground that interspirituality explores: the dimension of mysticism across traditions. Interspirituality is based on the existential, innate interdependence of all beings, the essential interconnectedness of all reality.”<sup>307</sup>

- Wayne Teasdale

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307. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 173.

## CHAPTER 3

### Bernard Lonergan's Notion of Self-Transcendence

#### Introduction

“[To] be authentically human is to transcend oneself, that self-transcendence *raises the question of God*, and that *the realization of self-transcendence* occurs when we are in love, and that the all-embracing and deepest love is *being in love with God*.”<sup>308</sup>  
- Bernard Lonergan

Self-transcendence is the central inquiry of Bernard Lonergan, as a philosopher, theologian, and humanist. To illustrate a comprehensive and specific viewpoint of Lonergan on self-transcendence, I will focus my exploration on two of his masterpieces, *Insight* and *Method in Theology*, some of his articles, and scholarly studies on Lonergan's thoughts. In this study, I will employ the valuable resources of Lonergan's studies archived at the Lonergan Center at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In this chapter I will describe Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence, beginning with an overview of Lonergan and his theological perspective. It is beneficial to know his personal and theological background, especially in order to see the influence of theological perspectives on grace from Augustine in the Patristic era (from 100 to 800) and Aquinas in the Scholastic era (from 1100 to 1700), culminating in Lonergan as a modern theologian. Lonergan develops a theology of *sanctifying grace* which emphasizes the subject rather than the soul. Grace is thus more than healing and cultivating; rather, grace transforms the quality of the self. *Sanctifying grace* is a Christian theology concerning the supernatural infusion of

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308. Bernard Lonergan, “Religious Commitment,” in *The Pilgrim People: A Vision with Hope*, ed. Joseph Papin (Villanova, PA: The Villanova University Press, 1970), 57. Emphasis added.



God's grace within a human's soul as transformative redemption from sin. *Sanctifying grace* emphasizes God's action instead of human action. Throughout the centuries, *sanctifying grace* has become debatable among theologians, including Lonergan as a modern theologian who proposes that the work of *sanctifying grace* requires human participation as subjects instead of only being the objects of God's grace. This perspective becomes the basic foundation for Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence. Presenting this theological background is particularly important as no theological thought appears in a vacuum.

Lonergan develops his notion of self-transcendence based on the self as consciousness and the self as desire. Consciousness is not a perception of mind but rather the quality of the self as being present through the four levels of intentional consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. This intentional consciousness affirms the unrestricted desire to know which leads to the totality of subjective presence or self-transcendence. For Lonergan, self-transcendence is not the self's action but points to the subjective presence of one's doing as one's knowing. In other words, while the self is doing, he or she becomes knowing as himself or herself as a knower through the transforming process of intentional conscious. The self is required to perform a radical transformation, which is called the threefold conversion: intellectual, moral, and religious. Conversion is the path of being authentic due to the incarnate subject. Through conversion in life's journey, the self becomes the subject who is not alienated from, but rather incarnated in the world by being authentic subjectivity in relation with others due to intersubjectivity. I will discuss this in more detail later in this chapter and the following chapters.

Finally, Lonergan's thought culminates in *being in love with God* as a mystical way within ordinary life, since consciousness is not a perception but the authentic self. By following the path laid out by Lonergan's theological concepts, the subjectivity of the self can achieve his or her self-transcendence with others and God.

## Bernard Lonergan and an Overview of his Theological Basis

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) was a Canadian Jesuit philosopher-theologian. He was born on December 17, 1904 in Buckingham, Quebec, Canada. He entered the Jesuit order in 1922 and was ordained as a priest in 1936. He studied mathematics, philosophy, and theology in England and Rome. Lonergan was a bilingual, speaking both English and French fluently, as well as being able to read Italian and German. He received a doctoral degree in theology from the Gregorian University in Rome in 1940, after writing his dissertation entitled *St. Thomas' Thought on "Gratia Operans [Operative Grace]"*. Lonergan taught at various universities, such as: Loyola College in Montreal, Regis College in Toronto, Boston College in Boston, and the Gregorian University in Rome. Of his published books, Lonergan's masterpieces are *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (1957) and *Method in Theology* (1972). On November 26, 1984, he passed away at the Jesuit Infirmary in Pickering, Ontario. There are now Lonergan research centers across Canada and the US, offering seminars, lectures, and newsletters. Research on Lonergan's thoughts is collected into two major journal volumes: *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* and *Lonergan Workshops*, as well as a digital *Bernard Lonergan Archive* at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

As one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century, Lonergan is known as a humanist as he reconstructs the medieval theology of grace as divine power *into* a modern perspective of self-transcendence as the nature of human capacity through intentional consciousness. There is a theological trajectory from Augustine to Aquinas, and from Aquinas to Lonergan; and generally, the trajectory is influenced by the Greek philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. In Christianity, the debate on sin and grace has been ongoing for centuries, and continues to the present day. In the fourth century, there were polemics on

original sin between Pelagius and Augustine. For Pelagius, human beings are neither powerless nor trapped in original sin, but rather have free will. In opposition to Pelagius, Augustine proposes that original sin is unavoidable in human existence and only through grace from God can human potentiality be actualized in daily life.<sup>309</sup>

Following Augustine's theology, Aquinas, as one of the Scholastics, extends the healing grace (*gratia sanans*) toward human sin by the elevating grace (*gratia elevans*) of human nature, due to the empowerment of human beings as the divine participant in action. In light of the interiority and exteriority of human existence, Aquinas divides grace into two types: operative grace (*gratia operans*), which refers to the good desire/will or *motus* (motive), and cooperative grace (*gratia cooperans*), which refers to the actualization of the good desire/will in good works or *habitus* (habit).<sup>310</sup> The focus of the work of grace or *sanctifying grace* is the soul. The subject becomes the object of grace and the act of grace depends on what is known by the subject. On this point, Lonergan develops from the Aquinas' emphasis on the soul into theological anthropology, which emphasizes the subject. Aquinas' emphasis on the soul focuses on what is known by the self. Through *sanctifying grace*, the soul takes an essential role of consciousness in revealing and understanding an object. Likewise, Lonergan's emphasis on the subject focuses on the potentiality of the self as a knower or a subject acting by questioning an object through intentional consciousness. For Lonergan, *sanctifying grace* empowers the self to become conscious as the subject or an

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309. My dissertation has limited room to explore more on this polemic. To study further on the polemic between Pelagius and Augustine, see scholarly works on early Christian thought by J. Patout Burns, *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1980) and *Theological Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981).

310. See a comprehensive scholarly work on grace: Stephen J. Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993).

“incarnate being” in life experiences.<sup>311</sup> On this point, Lonergan incorporates operative grace and cooperative grace into theological anthropology by developing the emphasis from the soul to the subject without neglecting one for the other. Matthew Petillo highlights:

The subject—the core of the self—is transcendental in the sense that it becomes present to the knower as a perduring component of conscious awareness. “Soul” and “subject” both refer to the reality of the self considered from different points of view. “Soul” refers to the object reached by a series of deductions within the context of metaphysical reflection; “subject” (or “self”) refers to the same reality not as the term of inference but as experienced in the field of awareness.<sup>312</sup>

The subject performs the operation of intentional consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. The intentional consciousness is called the transcendental method, in which the self performs not as an object of attention, but rather as the subjective presence. However, by emphasizing intentional consciousness, Lonergan encompasses the Scholastics’ introspection as the realm of interiority while also developing introspection, which “is not a matter of taking an inner look, but ... a heightening of awareness in the performance of intentional acts.”<sup>313</sup> At this point, Lonergan distinguishes between perception and consciousness. Perception refers to the result of one taking an inner look at his or her experience of seeing, hearing, feelings, etc. While consciousness refers to the intensifying of one’s awareness through experience, Lonergan emphasizes consciousness as related to the subjective presence as a knower.

As a subjective presence, the self has to operate on four intentional consciousness levels: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. Subjective presence takes an operative role in consciousness, and desire is recognized as the axis of the totality of the

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311. Thomas J. McPartland, “Consciousness and Normative Subjectivity: Lonergan’s Unique Foundational Enterprise,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995): 123.

312. L. Matthew Petillo, “The Theological problem of Grace and Experience: A Lonergan Perspective,” *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 604.

313. Petillo, “Theological problem of Grace and Experience,” 605.

human being. Through the four levels, the subject has to transform his or her self through conversions: intellectual, moral, and religious. This conversion transforms the self into an incarnate being in a new way of life. The self's operation and transformation lead to a life-fulfilment of human authenticity, which is called *being in love with God*.

For Lonergan, the soul and the subject are an integral part of existence of the self and cannot be separated. The subject is not the object of grace but the subject is the transcendental presence through consciousness, which does not mean perception, but consciousness as the subjective presence. For Lonergan, *sanctifying grace* has a new meaning, more active and holistic, in the self who transforms himself or herself to be “a radical self-presence.”<sup>314</sup> *Sanctifying grace* is not only the healing and elevating of the self, but also the self experiencing grace and becoming grace itself through being a subjective presence. The radical self-presence relies on the quality of the self-transcendence by a dynamic state of *being in love with God* as the human being's fulfilment of authenticity. To sum up: there is a theological trajectory that develops from Augustine, to Aquinas, and to Lonergan; from God, to the soul, and to the subject, respectively.

### The Self: Consciousness as Subjective Presence and Desire

#### *The Self as Consciousness*

In the 1968 *Aquinas Lecture* on the topic *The Subject*, Lonergan mentioned that, due to the influence of contemporary philosophy, there was a shifting emphasis on the subject

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314. Petillo, “Theological problem of Grace and Experience,” 607.

over the object.<sup>315</sup> A person is not only an object of the truth, but the subject of the truth, which takes position as the operation of life. The subject plays an important role of intentionality, which drives completely

beyond the subject ... the subject is capable of an intentional self-transcendence, of going beyond what he [or she] feels, what he [or she] imagines, what he [or she] thinks, what seems to him [or her], to something utterly different, to what is so. Moreover, before the subject can attain the self-transcendence of truth, there is the slow and laborious process of conception, gestation, parturition. But teaching and learning, investigating, coming to understand, marshalling and weighing the evidence, these are not independent of the subject, of time and place, of psychological, social, historical conditions. The fruit of truth must grow and mature on the tree of the subject, before it can be plucked and placed in its absolute realm.<sup>316</sup>

This affirms that for a person to be a subject, he or she must be a completely operative being, which means being dynamic and not static. Moreover, not all human beings are automatically subjects. Louis Dupré, a Belgian phenomenologist and religious philosopher, stated in his book *Transcendent Selfhood* that *self* is different from *individual*. He says, “As individual [a person] belongs to the world; as self he [or she] surpasses [transcends] it. Once the individual is born, its only natural task is to reproduce itself in other individuals ... For the individual the most important day is *the day of birth*; for the self it is *the day of death* of the individual.”<sup>317</sup> Dupré highlights that being is not merely “an objective *given*, but a subjective

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315. Lonergan, *The Subject* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1968), 2. Contemporary philosophy refers to the thought of Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Buber. Lonergan describes the sources of neglect of the subject: first, theologians who over emphasize the mystery of faith but ignore human beings’ mind in response to it. As a consequence, the thought of truth becomes the single truth. In other words, to be faithful, the natural state of humans is discounted. Second, the Aristotelian notion of science is not concerned with the subject. The only focus of interest is the object of inquiry. Third, the neglect of the subject is “the metaphysical of the soul” which should be accounted as potency, habit, and action (3-7).

316. Lonergan, *Subject*, 3.

317. Louis Dupré, *Transcendent Selfhood: The Loss and Rediscovery of the Inner Life* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), 31.

principle of self-development.”<sup>318</sup> Each person has a potentiality of achievement through transcendence which employs “the very center of self-awareness.”<sup>319</sup> In line with Dupré, Lonergan, in his book *Insight*, states that “[a human being] is not inert.”<sup>320</sup> This statement is the basic foundation of Lonergan’s notion of the self as holistic being. The self is not static, but a subject developing through consciousness.

### Consciousness as Subjective Presence

Etymologically, consciousness comes from the Latin roots *cum* (with) and *scire* (to know), meaning “self knowing,” “self-awareness,” or “self of thing.”<sup>321</sup> Consciousness has had a number of meanings throughout the centuries and various academic fields. Thus, what precisely does Lonergan mean by the term *consciousness*? Lonergan, known as the “philosopher of consciousness,”<sup>322</sup> emphasizes consciousness as the data of one’s own “self-inquiry, self-understanding, and self-knowledge”<sup>323</sup> through experiences. Lonergan distinguishes between perception and consciousness. Consciousness is not perception of the mind, but rather consciousness is a quality of the self’s “*awareness immanent in cognitional*

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318. Dupré, *Transcendent Selfhood*, 32.

319. Dupré, *Transcendent Selfhood*, 34.

320. Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, eds., Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 373.

321. William L. Reese, *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1980), 104.

322. McPartland, “Consciousness and Normative Subjectivity,” 114. McPartland describes, “Lonergan urges that contemporary philosophical culture retrace the journey in search of foundations along the path from medieval essentialism to Descartes’ thinking substance, to Kant’s transcendental ego, to Hegel’s subject, to Kierkegaard’s *this subject*: from object as object, to the subject as object, to the subject as subject ... Lonergan [proves] subject as *conscious*” (116).

323. McPartland, “Consciousness and Normative Subjectivity,” 116.

acts.”<sup>324</sup> Consciousness leads to the self as knower. Joseph Flanagan highlights that “there is a crucial distinction between experiencing yourself doing knowing and knowing yourself as a knower in and through your acts of knowing.”<sup>325</sup> Consciousness is about the subject or the self’s action as Lonergan affirms: “*one is conscious*.”<sup>326</sup> In other words, consciousness is not a perception of objects only. Instead, consciousness is a subjective presence. Flanagan highlights:

Consciousness or awareness, then, is preliminary to attending, and sets the conditions for attending. If you were not already aware, you could not attend. *Attending changes the way you are conscious*, from being vaguely aware to being selectively and distinctly aware. However, besides the conscious act of attending, there is also you, *the conscious subject*, who is doing the attending. *Consciousness is a characteristic not only of certain acts, but also of the subject’s own mode of being.*<sup>327</sup>

Consciousness is about the subjective presence, about the subject attending concretely in totality. For example, a person takes a walk to the Village, a historical downtown area in Claremont, California. The act of walking is not only the experience of a walk. The person becomes aware of being engaged in the act of walking, through being the subject who is attending totally in the Village. Taking a walk to the Claremont Village is not only an act itself, but also an act of the subject in which the person becomes conscious of all his or her activities there. As Lonergan states, “*I am a knower*, if I am a concrete and intelligible *unity-identity-whole*, characterized by acts of sensing, perceiving, imagining, inquiring, understanding, formulating, reflecting, grasping the unconditioned, and judging.’ The

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324. Lonergan, *Insight*, 344. Emphasis added.

325. Joseph Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge: An Essay in Lonergan Philosophy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 131.

326. Lonergan, *Subject*, 7. Emphasis added.

327. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 132. Emphasis added.



fulfilment of the conditions is given in consciousness.”<sup>328</sup> The constitutive subject plays the role of the operator of consciousness in which “by seeing there becomes present what is seen, by hearing there becomes present what is heard, by imagining there becomes present what is imagined, and so on.”<sup>329</sup> The subject or the self becomes present through an attentiveness of seeing, hearing, and imagining. Walter E. Conn highlights that “the self-as-subject experienced in consciousness does not exist without consciousness.”<sup>330</sup>

The role of consciousness means that the subject becomes the operator of consciousness because, for Lonergan, an experience is considered to be conscious by taking into account the psychological dimensions of the subject. Referring to the example above, by taking a walk to the Claremont Village, a person becomes present in experiencing what is seen, what is heard, what is smelled, what is memorized, etc. This points to a subject who is present in his or her operating consciousness. Lonergan affirms,

The operations [seeing, hearing, touching, walking, deciding, etc.] then not only intend objects. There is to them a further psychological dimension. They occur consciously and by them the operating subject is conscious. Just as operations by their intentionality make objects present to the subject, so also by consciousness they make the operating subject present to himself [or herself].<sup>331</sup>

What is revealed in a person’s consciousness is not only an object and an action, but also an acting subject or the self. The subject as the operator of consciousness leads to the self as a knower. The self as consciousness has four levels of operation that work intentionally in the self. The four levels are, comprehensively: empirical due to experience, intellectual due to understanding, rational due to judging, and responsibility due to action. Intentional

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328. Lonergan, *Insight*, 343-4. Emphasis added.

329. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 7.

330. Walter E. Conn, “Understanding the Self in Self-Transcendence,” *Pastoral Psychology* 46 (1997): 11.

331. Lonergan, *Method*, 8.

consciousness is “the process of waking up from unconsciousness to empirical consciousness,” not as perception, but as the self-experience as the subject.<sup>332</sup> Based on this intentional consciousness, Michele Saracino highlights Lonergan’s affirmation that each person is not automatically a subject of the self, but “*becomes* a subject, that is, appropriates his/her subjectivity by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible in relation to the world.”<sup>333</sup> These levels are called the four transcendental precepts that draw all subjects to be “true selves.”<sup>334</sup>

To be a subjective presence in consciousness, Lonergan proposes *sublation* as a way of waking the subject, as Lonergan states:

[T]he fourth level of intentional consciousness—the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision, action—*sublates* the prior levels of experiencing, understanding, judging. It goes beyond them, sets up a new principle and type of operations, directs them to a new goal but, so far from dwarfing them, preserves them and brings them to a far fuller fruition.<sup>335</sup>

Sublation is “a philosophical term of art” that Lonergan reconstructs from Hegel in which sublation *is* the unrestricted desire to know.<sup>336</sup> Sublation points to the conflicting dynamic between “the pure desire to know and other human desires” in the process of sublation, from the lower to the higher.<sup>337</sup> The process itself is not strictly linear, but rather an operation of

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332. Patrick H. Byrne, “Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject as Subject,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995), 138.

333. Michele Saracino, *On Being Human: A Conversation with Lonergan and Levinas* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2003), 66.

334. Lonergan, *Method*, 53.

335. Lonergan, *Method*, 316. Emphasis added.

336. Michael H. McCarthy, *Authenticity as Self-Transcendence: The Enduring Insights of Bernard Lonergan* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 141. See also, Lonergan, *Subject*, 21; Lonergan, *Insight*, 446-8.

337. Lonergan, *Insight*, 447.

back-and-forth movement. Michael H. McCarthy comprehensively explains the meaning of sublation in Lonergan's thought:

It refers to the precise relation of functional interdependence between lower and higher forms of human activity. The higher forms preserve and respect the integrity of the lower while transcending their limited intentional scope. The lower, in turn, serve as concrete enabling conditions of the higher's possibility and emergence. Higher forms are therefore related to lower forms by what Lonergan calls functional complementary.<sup>338</sup>

Sublation is a fundamental process of being conscious as a subject. He or she is required to come through the sublation dynamic of "the lower as more 'essential' and the higher as more 'excellent,'" <sup>339</sup> which is due to "genuine objectivity" and "authentic subjectivity" of the self.<sup>340</sup> In sublation, there is a discernment process where outer and inner aspects are integrated.

Lonergan explains the operation of sublation by proposing the four levels of intentional consciousness:

There is the *empirical* level on which we sense, perceive, imagine, feel, speak, move. There is an *intellectual* level on which we inquire, come to understand, express what we have understood, work out the presuppositions and implications of our expression. There is the *rational* level on which we reflect, marshal the evidence, pass judgment on the truth or falsity, certainty or probability, of a statement. There is the *responsible* level on which we are concerned with ourselves, our own operations, our goals, and so deliberate about possible courses of action, evaluate them, decide, and carry out our decisions.<sup>341</sup>

Lonergan uses the term "level" to show the dynamic of the self or the realm of consciousness in a new dimension. The term implies a vertical movement which uses the sublation model as

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338. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 141-2.

339. Mark T. Miller, *The Quest for God & the Good Life: Lonergan's Theological Anthropology* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 19.

340. Lonergan, *Method*, 292, 265.

341. Lonergan, *Method*, 9; Lonergan, *Insight*, 346-52.

the dialectical logic. Patrick H. Byrne highlights that the operating subject is present in the sublation, describing:

[T]he conscious subject as the agent of the transcendental operators that transform *the subject present-to-self on a lower level into the subject present-to-self on a higher level*. This is most evident when a subject which had been merely empirically attentive (first level conscious) becomes puzzled about something, begins inquiring and pursuing insights in response to this inquiry.”<sup>342</sup>

In other words, it shows “the sublation of self by self” or “the process of waking up” in which the subject becomes the self by his or her own volition in the four levels of intentional consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding.<sup>343</sup> Thus, the sublation of self by self is a movement of the self, as the agent of the transcendental operator, from absent to empirical. In light of theological anthropology, Mark T. Miller highlights that the level refers to a personal movement in which the “movement from one level to another provides for *personal growth* and ultimately for *social progress*. As in the self-correcting process of learning, our experience, understanding, judgment, and decision both emerge from and transform the concrete social situation.”<sup>344</sup> So, the intentional consciousness transforms personal growth to social progress.

#### Empirical Consciousness through the Four Levels of Intentional Consciousness

The four levels of intentional consciousness, empirical, intellectual, rational, and responsible, are accessed by the self’s operation: experience, understanding, judgment, and decision, respectively. In each of these four levels, the self is “*conscious* in the sense of being

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342. Byrne, “Consciousness,” 139. Italics are original. Byrne notes that he credits to Mark Doorley.

343. Byrne, “Consciousness,” 139.

344. Miller, *Quest for God*, 47. Emphasis added.

self-aware or self-present and *intentional* in the sense of seeking a goal.”<sup>345</sup> Lonergan defined the four operational levels as a “transcendental method [which] is the concrete and dynamic unfolding of human attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility.”<sup>346</sup> The transcendental precepts are:

*Experiencing.* As the first level, experience refers to raw or “fresh” data. Lonergan distinguishes data of experience into two types: “the data of sense and the data of consciousness.”<sup>347</sup> For Lonergan, the experience level tends to rely on the data of consciousness instead of the data of sense, because the data of sense only refers to what is experienced through the five physical senses. The data of sense is only one step that leads to objectivity. Meanwhile, the data of consciousness is obtained when the self pays attention to his or her experience: the data of sense as comprehended by the subjective presence. The data of consciousness is the basic foundation for the next three levels. Experience provides the data of sense and of consciousness. The norm operative of this level is “*be attentive!*”

*Understanding.* As the second level, understanding begins with questions about an experience, due to inquiry or desire to know more deeply. The self asks beyond his or her subjective presence, dealing with the data of consciousness. For Lonergan, understanding is a process of gaining insight to reality and then reflecting on it as the foundation for the next level, on judgment. Moreover, comprehensive understanding influences the relationship between all four levels. At this point, understanding is “neither knowing nor sympathizing,”

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345. Miller, *Quest for God*, 46.

346. Lonergan, *Method*, 24; 13-20.

347. Lonergan, *Method*, 201, 259.

but formulating an insight.<sup>348</sup> Understanding transforms the data into questions in order to gain insight. The norm operative of this level is “*be intelligent!*”

*Judging.* As the third level, judging is a verification of the self toward his or her understanding. The understanding itself sits between the fact as the reality, and the value as the ideal, which together require the self to judge correctly to learn the truth. For Lonergan, the standard for making a correct judgment “is not some element of human subjectivity or some external authority; rather, it is the whole person operating properly on multiple levels of conscious intentionality.”<sup>349</sup> The multiple levels of conscious intentionality drive the self to perform critical reflection, producing objectivity. This relates to Lonergan’s thought that the good is not abstract but “comprehensive.”<sup>350</sup> Thus, judgment is not a single act but radiates the entire existence of the self as the human good. Lonergan describes this judgment as having three determinations:

[The first proposition relates to] an object of thought, the content of an act of conceiving, defining, thinking, supposing, considering. But a *proposition* also may be the content of an act of judging and then is the content of an affirming or denying and agreeing or disagreeing, an assenting or dissenting.

[ ... ]

[The second relates to questions.] There are *questions* for reflection, and they may be met by answering yes or no. There are questions for intelligence, and they may not be met by answering yes or no ... [J]udging is answering yes or no to a question for reflection.

[ ... ]

[The third involves *personal commitment*.] A judgment is the responsibility of the one that judges. It is a personal commitment.<sup>351</sup>

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348. Miller, *Quest for God*, 50.

349. Miller, *Quest for God*, 52. Miller highlights external authorities such as scientific experts, the wisdom of the ages, tradition, scripture, or revelation. For Lonergan, all of these authorities are invaluable for human living, but an individual must experience, understand, and judge these authorities.

350. Miller, *Quest for God*, 85.

351. Lonergan, *Insight*, 296-7. Emphasis added.

These determinations become a basic foundation of verification due to objectivity. The self can make “correct judgments: ‘Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity.’”<sup>352</sup> In other words, for Lonergan, a correct judgment is not solely dependent on human subjectivity or external authority; instead, it is discerned by the self through its own intentional consciousness—i.e. being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable, and being responsible—which creates genuine objectivity in the life of the self. Objectivity lays on a longing for objective “judgment of value”<sup>353</sup> and it involves the self’s feelings which are “mediated by meaning.”<sup>354</sup> Lonergan highlights the way feelings influence intentional consciousness, stating that without feelings, the self’s knowing and deciding would be “paper thin.”<sup>355</sup> Meaning is found within feelings, and it is within both that true value is found for personal and communal life, because meaning is integrated within intersubjectivity. Judging plays an important role in knowing what is truly good, truly valuable, and truly worthwhile. The norm operative of this level is “*be reasonable!*”

*Deciding.* As the fourth level, deciding is the peak of deliberation. Founded on the previous intentional process of experience to understanding, then understanding to judging, the self

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352. Miller, *Quest for God*, 52. See Lonergan, *Insight*, 296-303; *Method*, 265, 292.

353. Lonergan, *Method*, 38; 31-6. See Miller, *Quest for God*, 58. He summarizes Lonergan’s scale of preference of values: “On the first level are ‘*vital values*,’ such as physical health. Then come ‘*social values*,’ particularly the good of order that patterns or relates vital values and provides the context for their fulfilment. The economy is an example of a social value. Third, ‘*cultural values*’ are grounded on vital and social values, yet they stand in judgment over vital and social goods, assigning meaning and value in a community. Freedom of speech would be an example. Fourth are ‘*personal values*,’ the values of persons themselves, persons as self-transcendent, as loving and beloved, as creative, as originators of value. Finally, there are ‘*religious values*,’ which regard ultimate value, the divine.” Emphasis added.

354. Lonergan, *Method*, 31.

355. Lonergan, *Method*, 30-1.

comes to determine value. The value is not only true or good in concept, but also true or good as practiced by the self through *a reflective question: What should I do?* In this level, there is a turning point from knowing what is true to doing, or the “realization of *value in action*.”<sup>356</sup> The value itself becomes objective because it is verified by the judging process which leads to what is truly good. Lonergan emphasizes that “by the good is never meant some abstraction. Only the concrete is good.”<sup>357</sup> What is valuable is concrete and good, but Conn highlights, “Sometimes the valuable and the satisfying coincide, and self-transcendence comes easily. But often enough, as we all know too well, the valuable is dissatisfying, disagreeable, and then self-transcendence means overcoming the disagreeable for the sake of doing the good.”<sup>358</sup> On this level, the self must have freedom and commitment to his or her self in order to make the good become concrete. Even though feeling is an essential part of the good and valuable, as shown in the level of judging, feelings alone are not enough. Saracino highlights Lonergan’s thought that “[a]s feelings open humanity to what is good, ‘they do not bring commitment about.’ Commitment arises beyond feelings, in understanding, judging, and in the free act of decision.”<sup>359</sup> The decision level is a transitional level of moving toward self-transcendence based on freedom and horizon. *Freedom* is “a special kind of contingency ... [it] arises ... in the order of spirit, of intelligent grasp, rational reflection, and morally guided will.”<sup>360</sup> Even though freedom can be understood as a negative aspect, freedom is also a positive aspect for good decisions. Correct decisions happen when

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356. Conn, “The Desire for Authenticity: Conscience and Moral Conversion,” in *The Desire of the Human Heart: An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Paulist, 1988), 38. Emphasis added.

357. Lonergan, *Method*, 36.

358. Conn, “Desire for Authenticity,” 41.

359. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 73.

360. Lonergan, *Insight*, 642.



freedom relies on the spirit, intelligent grasp, rational reflection, and morality, which leads to responsibility. Lonergan defines decision as being “about whom and what you are for and, again, whom and what you are against.”<sup>361</sup> There is a freedom in one’s decision. Lonergan differentiates freedom into two types: the “essential freedom” and the “effective freedom.”<sup>362</sup> The *essential freedom* is that which “human beings have in the abstract simply by virtue of being human.”<sup>363</sup> *Effective freedom* is that which “a person has, based on the current social situation set up by the person’s previous choice and previous choice of others.”<sup>364</sup> Miller highlights that there is a link between freedom and horizon. For Lonergan, *horizon* is “the scope of a person’s or group’s knowledge and interest,” which points to the borderline of what the self is knowing, concerning, valuing, or conducting in personal or communal context.<sup>365</sup> The self’s horizon is the world of the self. On one hand, horizon is “the fertile source of further knowledge and care,” and on the other hand, horizon shows the limitation of the self.<sup>366</sup> The self-horizon lies on “horizontal freedom” and “vertical freedom.”<sup>367</sup> *Horizontal freedom* is “one’s ability to select particular things within a given horizon.”<sup>368</sup> *Vertical freedom* is “the ability to select a horizon” to advance toward, where the self is able “to know and to desire, to love and to serve.”<sup>369</sup> Self-freedom requires a responsibility of

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361. Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

362. Lonergan, *Insight*, 643-7.

363. Miller, *Quest for God*, 60.

364. Miller, *Quest for God*, 60.

365. Miller, *Quest for God*, 60. See Lonergan, *Method*, 235-7.

366. Lonergan, *Method*, 237.

367. Lonergan, *Method*, 237. Lonergan credits Joseph de Finance.

368. Miller, *Quest for God*, 60.

369. Miller, *Quest for God*, 61.

morality based on innate value. These abilities influence the self in making good choices in his or her decisions as an essential process of discernment and as the way of becoming. Thus, horizon is a basic foundation for objectivity in the self in order to make a fully conscious decision which depends on “one’s horizon, one’s outlook, [or] one’s world view.”<sup>370</sup> However, a decision, as the fourth level of intentional consciousness, is more than a changing of the self’s horizon. Rather, a decision leads to a concrete action in which Lonergan pinpoints *being in love with God* as “the basic fulfilment of our conscious intentionality.”<sup>371</sup> The norm operative of this level is “*be responsible!*”

Finally, Lonergan stresses that the achievement of intentional consciousness is the self-transcendence in which “by deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, we can know and do, not just what pleases us, but what truly is good, worthwhile. Then we can be principles of *benevolence* and *beneficence*, capable of genuine collaboration and of *true love*.”<sup>372</sup> The intentional consciousness is not an abstract theory of being but a concrete operation for developing the self as a subjective presence in an empirical life. Vernon Gregson highlights that the levels employ Lonergan’s term of “method” as “the mind’s method [of] a self-correcting process.”<sup>373</sup> This affirms that the intentional consciousness process does not lead to perception, but leads to subjective presence: the self who is present through empirical, intellectual, rational, and responsible operations in the reality of life.

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370. Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

371. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

372. Lonergan, *Method*, 35. Emphasis added. The Latin etymologies of *benevolence* and *beneficence* are *bene* (good) + *velle* (will), and *bene* (good) + *facere* (make), respectively. I credit this word’s etymology to Michael McGrath, “Bernard Lonergan” (Directed Study, Claremont School of Theology, CA, March 25, 2018).

373. Vernon Gregson, “The Desire to Know: Intellectual Conversion,” in *The Desire of the Human Heart: An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Paulist, 1988), 23.

### *The Self as Desire*

As I described previously, for Lonergan, the self is not an object but a subject who gains deepening questions through the transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible. That means to become an authentic subjective presence, the self must be opened to the knowing of the unknown. It draws the self to wondering and questioning, which “[open] humanity to the possibility of being human, of transcendence.”<sup>374</sup> To be open to the knowing of the unknown, as the essence of the unrestricted desire to know, points to the notion of desire. In light of Lonergan’s theological anthropology, Saracino highlights that “the subject’s unrestricted *desire* to know intends and leads to being.”<sup>375</sup> In other words, the unrestricted desire to know becomes the self’s longing, as the dynamic of becoming subject to understand all reality, including the reality of the knowing of the unknown or mystery.<sup>376</sup> However, being open to the knowing of the unknown is a part of the unrestricted desire to know.

On the level of judging, the self has to decide what is valuable and what is not. This filter of valuable versus non-valuable is then used to achieve “pure desire,” as “the desire is not itself a knowing.”<sup>377</sup> The self obtains pure desire through “inquiring” and “reflecting,”<sup>378</sup> as Lonergan describes:

[J]ust as the pure desire is the intelligent and rational basis from which *we discern* between correct and incorrect answers, so also it is the intelligent and

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374. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 75.

375. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 74. Emphasis added.

376. This relates to the mystical consciousness that I will explore later in this chapter.

377. Lonergan, *Insight*, 373.

378. Lonergan, *Insight*, 374. Emphasis added.

rational basis from which we discern between valid and mistaken questions. In brief, the pure desire to know, whose objective is being, is the source not only of answers but also of their criteria, and not only of questions but also of the grounds on which they are screened. For it is *intelligent inquiry* and *reasonable reflection* that just as much yield the right questions as the right answers.<sup>379</sup>

Thus, pure desire refers to the process of finding objectivity for the good and the true as the essential aspect of being. The process of having pure desire points to *discernment* in which it will help an individual not to be an egoist, but to live truthfully. There is a link between the desire, the good, the true, and being. For Lonergan, there is no rational being that can exist without the desire to know. The desire to know “[means] the dynamic orientation manifested in questions for intelligence and for reflection ... [desire to know] is simply the *inquiring* and *critical spirit* of [a human being].”<sup>380</sup> Referring to Aristotle’s statement: “the beginning of wisdom is wonder,” Flanagan highlights that “a knower is a question, and what quiets such a knower is a correct answer. Questioning and answering are natural to knowers.”<sup>381</sup> Questioning and answering demonstrate that unrestricted desire to know is integrated with the being itself. The notion of being is “not of *what it is*, but of *how it comes* to be known and will actually be known.”<sup>382</sup> Being is not a static state, but a dynamic one because of desire. The unrestricted desire to know is a natural part of a knower and, through this desire to know, the self is able to transcend.

Conn highlights that human desire is “the drive to *be a self*, a center of strength; and the dynamism to *move beyond the self* in relationship.”<sup>383</sup> Conn affirms that *to be a self* and *to*

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379. Lonergan, *Insight*, 376. Emphasis added.

380. Lonergan, *Insight*, 372. Emphasis added.

381. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 138.

382. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 138.

383. Conn, “Understanding the Self,” 3.

*move beyond the self* are “inextricably connected and must always be understood together: namely, separation *and* attachment, independence *and* belonging, and autonomy *and* relationship.”<sup>384</sup> In other words, there is a ground rule that to achieve self-transcendence, the self has to become the subjective presence. The self, firstly, must enter the process of becoming his or her *true self* before he or she can fully transcend. True self is a process of becoming which leads to self-transcendence. Based on Thomas Merton’s notion of true self and false self, Carter Haynes highlights, “*True self* is other-focused and finds serenity through releasing the vestiges of egocentrism,” while false self focuses on one’s own needs and egoism.<sup>385</sup> In true self there is a desire to engage with reality beyond his or her own self. True self is drawn to “radical desire for self-transcendence.”<sup>386</sup> Meanwhile, many people negatively interpret the term “desire” as lust, but not Lonergan. He defines human desire as loving desire for others and God. Lonergan’s thought on loving desire is rooted in Christian theology as the incarnation of Christ as God’s desire. Saracino argues that implicit “in Lonergan’s work is the belief that the incarnation of Christ is the exemplary performance of authentic subjectivity. Consequently, all Christians desire to live in the image of God, to imitate Christ in their being.”<sup>387</sup> Elizabeth J. Snedden highlights that human beings are created by God’s desire. Because of the role of desire in creation, desire must be viewed “as integral to human living, and human capacity to search for truth, beauty, goodness, and love as rooted in the desire that moves us toward self-transcendence both in knowing and in

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384. Conn, “Understanding the self,” 3.

385. Haynes, “Identity,” 2. Emphasis added.

386. Conn, “Self-Transcendence, the True Self, and Self-Love,” *Pastoral Psychology* 46 (1998): 328.

387. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 57.

loving.”<sup>388</sup> The intersection of God and human manifests itself in desire as the incarnate power to love. For Lonergan, God is “the end, that is, the absolute finality of human existence. God moves humanity toward this end through the incarnation. In becoming human, God reorients human *being* for alterity, for others. The incarnation opens us for others.”<sup>389</sup> Being for others by being “*the redemptive community*” through love leads to the kingdom of God, in which “all of humanity will be united with each other and God in harmonious, peaceful, loving relationship.”<sup>390</sup> Thus, the incarnation of Christ becomes the exemplary figure of authentic subjectivity which manifests into each person who has the desire to live and to love in the image of God, and manifests through desirous incarnation to perform love through action.

Lonergan affirms that through the four levels of intentional consciousness as inquiry and reflection, desire or “*the eros of human spirit*” as “a single thrust” manifests in the process of knowing, as “to know the good, it must know the real; to know the real, it must know the true; to know the true, it must know the intelligible; to know the intelligible, it must attend the data.”<sup>391</sup> At this point, for Lonergan, *human desire* should be understood to have positive and valuable meaning and function for humanity and *to drive self-transcendence*. Because unrestricted desire comes by God, Miller highlights that “*desire is a natural longing for a supernatural fulfilment ... This unified, transcendent desire underlies all human activities ... The natural desire to know grounds transcendental precepts: Be attentive! Be*

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388. Elizabeth J. Snedden, *The Eros of the Human Spirit: The Writings of Bernard Lonergan, SJ*. (New York: Paulist Press, 2017), xx.

389. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 166.

390. Miller, *Quest for God*, 183-4.

391. Lonergan, *Method*, 13. Emphasis added.

intelligent! Be reasonable! Be responsible!”<sup>392</sup> Desire is all about the totality of subjective presence as the self. Desire is the axis that operates the holistic being without dichotomizing soul, mind, and body. Snedden highlights that for Lonergan, “fulfilment of desire [is] involved in ‘what we are doing when we are loving.’”<sup>393</sup> Love becomes concrete because there is desire that refers to the self as the subjective presence. To reach the fulfilment of desire, there is a tension, as Gregson highlights:

Desire, its struggles and its triumphs, is the clue to Lonergan, and not any desire, but your own desire, and my own, and his [or her] ... is not only a theory about human desire, though it certainly is that, but it is also and especially an invitation to name our own desires and not only to name them but to enhance their freedom to choose what is good.<sup>394</sup>

The self has to be clear with his or her own desire as a basic foundation, in order to be a subjective presence.

Human beings are desirous creatures as, for Lonergan, “humans are transcendental beings who, by nature, desire to understand intelligently, judge reasonably, and decide and act responsibly.”<sup>395</sup> Desire cannot simply cause sin, as implied in the common theological perspective of original sin. Lonergan argues that “basic sin is the root of the irrational in [one’s] rational self-consciousness.”<sup>396</sup> There are two opposing types of consciousness: “contraction of consciousness” drives sin, while intentional consciousness drives desire as the basis of self-transcendence.<sup>397</sup> Lonergan defines sin as “alienation from [a human being’s]

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392. Miller, *Quest for God*, 70-1. Emphasis added.

393. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 28.

394. Gregson, “Desire to Know,” 17.

395. John R. Friday, “Religious Experience, the Hermeneutics of Desire, and Interreligious Dialogue,” *Theological Studies* 74 (2013): 602.

396. Lonergan, *Insight*, 689.

397. Lonergan, *Insight*, 689.

authentic being, which is self-transcendence.”<sup>398</sup> When a human being chooses the contraction of consciousness instead of intentional consciousness, it attracts sin because the human being neglects the transcendental process. Moreover, Lonergan stresses that basic sin is not the event, but the irrationality which “consists in a failure of occurrence, in the absence in the will of a reasonable response to an obligatory motive.”<sup>399</sup> An irrational human being is in conflict with the original creature, which is a transcendental being, as “God is rational self-consciousness, [and the human being] was made in the image and likeness of God [*imago Dei*].”<sup>400</sup> Therefore, the human being, as the original creature, is also a being of rational self-consciousness. In other words, Lonergan’s notion of a personal being is based on the theological perspective of original blessing or “original innocent,” as the subject or the self is in harmonious relationship with the entire cosmos and God.<sup>401</sup> Snedden points out that “we do not thus disregard our inner, God-seeking truth without damage to our inner integrity, damage of which we cannot but be aware.”<sup>402</sup> At this point, Snedden highlights that human inner integrity is a natural part of the cosmos, which is fertile and dynamic. This fertility and dynamism are embedded in desire. Desire plays an operative role in the self as a knower, in both the concrete and mysterious aspects of life. Desire becomes a part of the self to be a knower, as Snedden proposes:

To know ourselves as a knower is not an easy task. But learning to recognize and affirm in our own conscious experience the outworking of the desire to know is perhaps the first and best way to learn how to appropriate desire, and

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398. Lonergan, *Method*, 364.

399. Lonergan, *Insight*, 690.

400. Lonergan, *Insight*, 691.

401. I credit this term to Richard Rohr on his session: “Attending to Love: Within the Director” at *Mennonite Spiritual Directors Network 3<sup>rd</sup> National Retreat*, Madonna Retreat & Conference Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 8, 2018.

402. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 38.



come to learn how all other yearnings and attractions fit within the broader vertical finality of our orientation into Divine Mystery.<sup>403</sup>

By accepting desire in the positive perspective, the self will not be alienated from his or her existence. Rather, his or her desire will be clarified through intentional consciousness, which is required to be open as the desiring subject to one's own self, others, and God.

Being the desiring subject means becoming the subjective presence who exists in a being of totality or embodied subject: mind, body, and soul. In regards to the embodied subject, Lonergan has a positive perspective on the body, as the body functions as a "receptor."<sup>404</sup> Saracino highlights that the self as "receptor, however, is not a static device or passive mass, but an engaged subject that receives and processes information through the body" through the levels of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding in the reality of life.<sup>405</sup> These levels occur in the self as part of the holistic being in mind, body, and soul, as the self receives the data of sense and transforms it into the data of consciousness. For Lonergan, the desiring subject must be active or a "center of activity,"<sup>406</sup> as he says that the desiring subject does not only raise questions, but also finds answers which "come only from inquiring and reflecting."<sup>407</sup> The achievement of human desire is "*total goodness and total love*"<sup>408</sup> in engaging the world, and perpetuating the "human good"<sup>409</sup> and love as the way of authenticity. To be an authentic subject, Lonergan requires the self to develop and to attend in

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403. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 47.

404. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 87.

405. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 87.

406. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 87.

407. Lonergan, *Insight*, 374.

408. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 57. Emphasis added.

409. See Lonergan, *Method*, 27-55.

life experiences. The self as the embodied subject has three patterns of experience: “biological, dramatic, and social.”<sup>410</sup> First, Saracino describes the biological pattern of experience as “the instinctive and the physiological experience of being human.”<sup>411</sup> The body’s physiological responses to stimuli influence one’s life. Second, the dramatic pattern of experience refers to “the personal narrative of the subject’s lived life in the world,”<sup>412</sup> that is, personal narrative drawn from interpersonal relationships or intersubjectivity. For Lonergan, the authentic subject is always affected by a person’s communal context. Third, the social pattern of experience refers to “the human person’s concrete relationship as s/he moves into the larger community.”<sup>413</sup> This pattern points to the participation of the self in economical, political, and cultural areas of society, among others. These three patterns affirm the self-transcendence of the desiring subject within the whole posture of the embodied subject.

In *Insight*, Lonergan explains that the desiring subject refers to a specific term: “pure desire ... [which is] giving free rein to intelligent and rational consciousness.”<sup>414</sup> Pure desire is a desire to know that the desiring subject performs as the center of activity and goes beyond his or her own self. Because of the desire, the self is not about the description of things but rather the expression of doing. In line with Flanagan, Snedden adds that in light of the four intentional consciousness levels, the desiring subject is “not merely an interesting fact but *a calling*,”<sup>415</sup> a calling to move forward into being in love and transcending the self in

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410. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 88.

411. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 88.

412. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 89.

413. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 89.

414. Lonergan, *Insight*, 373.

415. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 51. Emphasis added.

“*intending the truth.*”<sup>416</sup> For Lonergan, desire is far from egoistic assumptions; it tends to portray the self, in Saracino’s phrase, as “the good existentialist subject” which pinpoints the order of “understanding, action, and love.”<sup>417</sup> In other words, the desiring subject is the social subject, as Lonergan points out the concept of intersubjectivity as “fellow-feeling,”<sup>418</sup> where feelings are communicated in mutual love of “we” in action, feeling, and meaning.<sup>419</sup> There is no relationship between one person as subject and another person as object, but between two people as subjects.

Having said that, the self as consciousness is thrust toward subjective presence as the essentiality of humanness, and the self as desire is identical with the *eros* of human spirit which is the deepest human longing of being. Both consciousness and desire acknowledge that *the self is a knower*. This is to avoid the subject being self-alienated, and instead to support “*the subject as incarnate*” in the world.<sup>420</sup> The incarnate subject affirms the integration between the natural and the spiritual through consciousness, in which “consciousness is an integrated consciousness, integrated with cosmic energy.”<sup>421</sup> The cosmic energy rests on the account of intentional consciousness and desire or *eros*. In line with Thomas McPartland, Miller highlights that Lonergan’s cosmology “understand[s] the cosmos as fertile and dynamic, as providing the conditions for the possibility of its elements to combine in unpredictable, but intelligible ways that are creative of new levels of

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416. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 51. Emphasis added.

417. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 89.

418. Lonergan, *Method*, 57.

419. Lonergan, *Method*, 59.

420. Lonergan, *Subject*, 30. Emphasis added.

421. McPartland, “Consciousness and Normative Subjectivity,” 121.

interdependent recurrent schemes.”<sup>422</sup> Cosmic energy becomes the core of the incarnate subject in communication with the entire cosmos.

The incarnation of the subject gives impact to intersubjectivity by “acquaintance, companionship, collaboration, friendship, [and] love.”<sup>423</sup> This is how the subject may manifest itself in the capacity of self-transcendence through “ways of being conscious: empirically, intelligently, and rationally or reflectively.”<sup>424</sup> Coon adds, “Self-transcendence, in short, is a radically interpersonal, relational reality. Outside of relationship there is *no self*.”<sup>425</sup> In other words, no self-transcendence can exist without consciousness and desire, through which the self is constructed as being. The self has to be seen holistically, as Flanagan highlights the importance of “both the subject ‘doing’ the knowing and the object who is being mediated and known. As a subject you are immediately experienced, but as an object, you are mediated and known. In self-appropriation or self-knowing, you are revealing your identity to yourself.”<sup>426</sup> This defines the authentic self-transcendence in which self-appropriation is not only an external experience in relation to others, but also self-appropriation as an internal experience. In the identical process of being, the self should consider his or her appropriate desire through the four intentional consciousness levels.

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422. Miller, *Quest for God*, 23.

423. Lonergan, *Subject*, 30. See Saracino, *On Being Human*, 80. Saracino highlights, “Lonergan’s subject is obliged to understand, judge, and decide in order to achieve self-transcendence and avoid being alienated from God and others.”

424. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 132.

425. Conn, “Self-Transcendence,” 326. Emphasis added.

426. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 135.

## The Role of Self-Transcendence

### *Self-Transcendence*

For Lonergan, self-transcendence is not about doing, but is about the being of the self. Thus, self-transcendence is the central notion of being. This means self-transcendence points to becoming a *subject* through conscious intentionality in one's empirical experience engaging with others and God. Lonergan states that self-transcendence is the fulfilment of being as human. He does not talk about a concept of being but rather a notion of being. Flanagan states that Lonergan distinguishes between the terms "concept" and "notion." On one hand, "concepts are the contents or products of understanding. A notion on the other hand is the anticipation of understanding and expresses 'knowing' in its questioning phase."<sup>427</sup> Furthermore, a notion is

a vague idea or hunch you have about something before you actually come to know or witness it. Notional knowing is a priori knowing, but the a priori in this case is the sort of notional knowing that emerges with *wondering* or *questioning*. Notional knowing, then, is knowing the way your own questioning guides you to acts of understanding, and then moves you beyond understanding to correct judging, and beyond correct judging to repeated questioning toward a final objective that has absolutely no limits. *Being*, then, is notion defined in terms *not* of what it is, *but* of how it comes to be known and will actually be known.<sup>428</sup>

Lonergan's notion of being is rooted in the premise of the potentiality of the self as a subject or a knower by questioning an object through intentional consciousness. He develops Aristotle's and Aquinas' thoughts on the soul moving to the subject who not only has the ability to understand objects but can also question objects as the way of knowing. For Lonergan, questioning places the self in the paradoxical state in which "*we know and, at the*

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427. Flanagan, "Lonergan's Epistemology," *A Speculative Quarterly Review* 36 (1972): 88.

428. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 138. Emphasis added.

*same time, know that we do not know,*” because questioning is the way of knowing.<sup>429</sup> Knowing is not about an idea, but rather a performance of the self as a knower. At this point, the paradoxical knowing leads the self to the unrestricted desire to know through the questioning process: experiencing, understanding, and judging. Lonergan affirms that “being is what is to be known by the totality of true judgments” which leads to objectivity.<sup>430</sup> For example, a child plays on the ground, finds a small snack, and brings it to his mother. He does not know that the snack is a poisonous reptile without questioning, understanding, and judging the data. The process of questioning, understanding, and judging needs immediate, conscious, and personal experience.<sup>431</sup> Indeed, opening one’s eyes is not the same as understanding what one sees. The notion of being does not exist until “we understand and verify.”<sup>432</sup> For Lonergan, objectivity is not knowable, but rather it is “unknown and is to be known only by a concrete, comprehensive, and completely critical answering of an unrestricted questioning.”<sup>433</sup> On one hand, the self needs objectivity through comprehensive knowing, but, on the other hand, human knowing is “never comprehensive knowing, [and] our knowing [is] never fully objective in this precise sense.”<sup>434</sup> This affirms that Lonergan does not offer a concept of being but rather a notion of being, as each person has his or her own experience, which differs from others’ experiences. Thus, for Lonergan, the notion of being “is a notion defined in terms not of *what it is*, but of *how it comes* to be known and will

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429. Flanagan, “Lonergan’s Epistemology,” 81. Emphasis added.

430. Lonergan, *Insight*, 374.

431. Flanagan, “Lonergan’s Epistemology,” 80.

432. Flanagan, “Lonergan’s Epistemology,” 91.

433. Flanagan, “Lonergan’s Epistemology,” 96.

434. Flanagan, “Lonergan’s Epistemology,” 90.

actually be known.”<sup>435</sup> This is the basis of the self to be objective as a knower in order to achieve authenticity in self-transcendence.

Self-transcendence does “not only go beyond the subject but also it seeks what is independent of the subject.”<sup>436</sup> This means the first focus is not *what* but *who*, which points to the subject’s interior process: consciousness and desire as I described above. The independent subject refers to the transcendental precepts for deliberation, which are not only cognition and action. Rather the subject’s capacity for self-transcendence “becomes an actuality when one falls in love.”<sup>437</sup> Deliberation is an essential part of self-transcendence in order for the subject to avoid valueless action, because the insight of self-transcendence is value. Conn highlights, “Practical deliberation is directed not just to knowledge of value but also, and especially, to the realization of *value in action*.”<sup>438</sup> Thus, the value in action needs the subjective presence. Self-transcendence is more than just one’s action, as a self-transcendent person “knows precisely what one is doing when one is knowing.”<sup>439</sup> Lonergan firmly states that the “human world *does not come into being or survive without* deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, *without* the exercise of freedom and responsibility. It is a world of existential subjects and it objectifies the values that they originate in their creativity and their freedom.”<sup>440</sup> Self-transcendence relies on the true self to achieve “authenticity.”<sup>441</sup> Conn adds that self-

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435. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 138. Emphasis added.

436. Lonergan, *Method*, 104.

437. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

438. Conn, “Desire for Authenticity,” 38.

439. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” in *Conversion: Perspectives on Personal and Social Transformation*, ed. Walter E. Conn (New York: Alba House, 1978), 17.

440. Lonergan, *Subject*, 30. Emphasis added.

441. Lonergan, *Method*, 104.

transcendence is “a fulfillment of the fundamental desire for meaning, truth, value and love characteristic of personal beings.”<sup>442</sup> Fulfilment in self-transcendence brings “*a radical peace, the peace that the world cannot give*. That fulfilment bears fruit in a love of one’s neighbor that strives mightily to bring about the kingdom of God on this earth.”<sup>443</sup> Self-transcendence is like two sides of the same coin: the self’s love given to others and the self’s peace received by him or herself.

Each human being lives in tension “between the self as transcending and the self as transcended.”<sup>444</sup> As McCarthy highlights that “we live and die in a permanent state of existential tension, longing for comprehensive self-transcendence [human beings] never fully achieve.”<sup>445</sup> Self-transcendence is an ongoing process to perpetuate the “human good,” in which the self has to transform his or her horizon through conversion: intellectual, moral, and religious.<sup>446</sup> Conversion is a process of interiority that requires personal commitment. In light of human desire, conversion is a part of the human search for a holistic identity. Flanagan highlights that, for Lonergan, “the fundamental question is: *Who am I?* It can be answered in many different ways, since we have a number of different, emergent identities. However, our fundamental identity is that of a concrete, contingent knower, chooser, [and] lover.”<sup>447</sup> Conversion is an essential part of subjectivity as a movement of finding self-identity, in which the self will find the answer of *who I am*. There is no ongoing process for self-transcendence without conversion to reality, to meaning, and to love.

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442. Conn, “Self-Transcendence,” 324.

443. Lonergan, *Method*, 105. Emphasis added.

444. Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

445. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 178.

446. Lonergan, *Method*, 27-55.

447. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 12. Emphasis added.



## *Conversion*

First of all, in discussing conversion, I would like to clarify at the outset that the term “conversion” does not mean personal conversion from one religion to another, or from one belief to another. For Lonergan, conversion is an ongoing process of self-transcendence which has three dimensions: intellectual, moral, and religious. They are based on reality, meaning, and love, respectively. The work of conversion is “present” and “operative,” and occurs on “the fourth level of human consciousness, on the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision.”<sup>448</sup> Lonergan stresses that on the level of decision, conversion is “about whom and what you are for, and again, whom and what you are against. It is a decision illuminated by the manifold possibilities exhibited in dialectic. It is a fully conscious decision about one’s horizon, one’s outlook, one’s world-view.”<sup>449</sup> Brian J. Braman highlights, “We know that conversion in the general sense is a movement to a new horizon; it not only involves a change in how we successfully live our lives, but also expands what we consider most valuable and worthwhile.”<sup>450</sup> Conversion is living intellectually, morally, and religiously in the context of the personal, communal, and historical human being. In other words, “Conversion is *a new understanding of one’s self*.”<sup>451</sup> Conversion is about transformative authentic being. Miller adds, “Conversion is a positive change in the orientation of one’s liberty toward better possible choices and terminal values. It causes *a radical shift* in one’s fears and desires, satisfactions and values, beliefs and scales of preference. It frees one from inauthenticity for

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448. Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

449. Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

450. Braman, *Meaning*, 54.

451. Braman, *Meaning*, 54. Emphasis added.

greater authenticity.”<sup>452</sup> The radical change from inauthenticity to authenticity, for Lonergan, is “total surrender to the demands of the human spirit: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, [and] be in love.”<sup>453</sup> As I discussed above regarding the embodied subject as the totality of being, conversion of the self is not about a part of the human being such as the soul, but rather concerns the holistic being and totality of the self as a subjective presence in the daily reality of life. Saracino highlights that “conversion is not a simple turning or change, but a *transformation* that not only affects the subject, but also his/her relationship with God and others.”<sup>454</sup> Conversion is not a personal matter, but rather an interpersonal matter, as the doorway of self-transcendence. Braman underlines that conversion “opens the subject up most fully as human being.”<sup>455</sup> Conversion is connected to the embodied subject in the biological, dramatic, and social patterns of experience.

Conversion is “intensely personal, utterly intimate, still it is not so private as to be solitary. It can happen to many and they can form a community to sustain one another in their self-transformation, and to help one another in working out the implications, and in *fulfilling the promise of their new life*.”<sup>456</sup> For Lonergan, conversion is “ontic,” which means one becomes a different self from others because of his or her conversion.<sup>457</sup> He or she finds a new value that shapes his or her character, relationships, and lifestyle. There is a fundamental and momentary change based on freedom. Conversion is intertwined with the decision level,

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452. Miller, *Quest for God*, 149. Emphasis added.

453. Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

454. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 71. Emphasis added.

455. Braman, *Meaning*, 71.

456. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13. Emphasis added. See Lonergan, *Method*, 269.

457. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13.

especially regarding vertical freedom. Snedden highlights that “*conversion* refers to a vertical exercise of freedom whereby one moves from one horizon to another, an about-turn, a significant change in which characteristic features of the old must be discarded in a ‘new sequence which can keep revealing ever greater depth, breadth and wealth.’”<sup>458</sup> Moreover, conversion is the *core* of self-transcendence in which personal conversion impacts communal transformation. In the communal context, the radical change of conversion is also a change of horizon. However, communal conversion also needs “high seriousness and mature wisdom,”<sup>459</sup> because a community or social group “does not easily attain or maintain”<sup>460</sup> change. Conversion requires clear personal and interpersonal discernment and courage for communal change.

Indeed, conversion is not an instantaneous process, but rather a dynamic, ongoing process as it involves not only one person’s life, but also others’ lives, and includes the historical and cultural communities to which a person belongs. The self as the incarnate subject or the subjective presence, who has “the unrestricted *eros* for value,” plays a central role in conversion.<sup>461</sup> McCarthy highlights, “Effective and enduring conversion transforms more than the soul of the individual subject. It also transforms the environing world in which the subject thinks, acts, and lives.”<sup>462</sup> In other words, conversion, through self-appropriation, is sharing value both personally and communally. Surely, there is no communal transformation without personal conversion. Now, I want to discuss in detail the role of

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458. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 78. See Lonergan, *Method*, 237-8.

459. Lonergan, *Method*, 269.

460. Lonergan, *Method*, 269.

461. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 38.

462. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 37. See Lonergan, *Method*, 130-2.

Lonergan's three conversions in self-transcendence: intellectual conversion, moral conversion, and religious conversion.

### Intellectual Conversion

*Intellectual conversion* is conversion to reality, which leads to “a *radical clarification* and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge.”<sup>463</sup> Lonergan requires “radical clarification” in the way of knowing because what is experienced is often misperceived to be the whole of reality, due to the myth that “knowing is like looking, that objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there, and that the real is what is out there now to be looked at.”<sup>464</sup> In other words, truly objective knowing is found by moving beyond the sense experience—what is seen, heard, touched, felt, etc.—in order to judge and to give value and meaning to sense experiences. Lonergan highlights:

[T]he world mediated by meaning is a world known not by the sense experience of an individual but by the external and internal experience of a cultural community, and by the continuously checked and rechecked judgments of community. *Knowing*, accordingly, *is not just seeing*; it is experiencing, understanding, judging, and believing.<sup>465</sup>

Thus, one does not know by only taking a look, but rather one is required to understand, judge, and assign meaning or value to his or her experience. Intellectual conversion is the basis of the self to be a knower, by gaining objectivity of the reality beyond sense experiences, and having a capacity of understanding and judging. For example, a person takes a walk through the Claremont Village and sees a well-dressed man step off a Metrolink train

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463. Lonergan, *Method*, 238. Emphasis added.

464. Lonergan, *Method*, 238.

465. Lonergan, *Method*, 238. Emphasis added.

from Los Angeles. This is a visual experience, but the person who is walking does not know precisely who the well-dressed man is, whether he is a director, a detective, or an artist, etc. Knowing is not merely looking. Intellectual conversion is just the start of personal discernment and the self becoming a “critical realist,” meaning the self must be attentive in the process of experiencing, understanding, and judging.<sup>466</sup> This process requires the self to have an unrestricted desire to know. This emphasizes how the *core* of intellectual conversion is *knowledge of reality*. Braman highlights Lonergan’s thought that “consciousness itself is not a perception, but an experience, a usually tacit presence to ourselves that is concomitant to our intentional and imaginally and linguistically mediated presence to the world.”<sup>467</sup> Thus, intellectual conversion requires a corporeal, bodily experience of the self toward reality to obtain intentional consciousness.

Intentional consciousness works through the dynamic of experiencing, understanding, and judging as the way of self-affirmation. The most fundamental aspect of intellectual conversion is that “it pulls ‘one out of the attitude that the world of sense is the criterion of

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466. Lonergan, *Method*, 239. See Braman, *Meaning*, 60. Braman highlights, “Lonergan invites us to appropriate for ourselves the fact of *critical realism* as an alternative to the problem of knowing as some form of looking.” Emphasis added.

*Critical realism* is a philosophical approach to the process of knowing and Lonergan applies it to theology. See Bernard McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness: A Modest Proposal,” *Spiritus* 8 (2008): 47. McGinn explains, “Critical realism according to Lonergan, insists that objectivity is not a matter of some direct intuition of an already-out-there-now-real (or already-in-here-now-real ... ), but rather an issue of appropriating one’s conscious acts of attention, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility as grounding true judgments about the nature of reality and ethical choices about the proper values to be pursued in life. As [Lonergan] put it: ‘objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity.’” McGinn’s explanation highlights that Lonergan’s transcendental method is grounded in critical realism, in which consciousness depends on the subject rather than on a perception that appears from the object.

See also, a scholarly work on Lonergan’s critical realism: Neville Ann Kelly, “Consciousness Cosmopolis: Bernard Lonergan’s Critical Realism as a Complementary Approach to Integral Theory,” *Journal of Integral Theory and Practice* 9 (2014): 12-37.

467. Braman, *Meaning*, 60-1.

reality.”<sup>468</sup> Through the lens of the world of sense “[w]e must *confront our own contingency* as knowers and realize that human knowing is not about power; rather, it is concerned with a *radical self-honesty* whereby we let the pure unrestricted desire to know unfold through the dynamic of the question in order to allow being to manifest itself, that is, to respond to something not in us.”<sup>469</sup> Intellectual conversion involves not only experience, but also the capacity to understand that experience and to affirm the understanding through judgment. Recognition and affirmation are the dynamic of knowing, as Gregson describes: “*Knowing is not merely taking a good look*, it is attending and understanding and judging.”<sup>470</sup> Thus, in this meaning of knowing, intellectual conversion occurs not only on the first level of intentional consciousness, experience, but also on the second level, understanding, and the third level, judging, as well.

Miller highlights that “[b]y opening one’s mind to the existence of nonphysical realities, intellectual conversion can *open the door to faith and other aspects of religious conversion*.”<sup>471</sup> That affirms that intellectual conversion is the basic layer of self-affirmation as a *knower*. For the self, to be a knower “is not merely an interesting fact but a *calling*.”<sup>472</sup> In line with Snedden, John C. Haughey highlights that intellectual conversion is “the most universal way of awakening to call.”<sup>473</sup> Explicitly, Haughey mentions that intellectual conversion is “*conversion to reality*” in which the self is called “to be authentic by living in

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468. Braman, *Meaning*, 61.

469. Braman, *Meaning*, 63.

470. Gregson, “Desire to Know,” 26. Emphasis added.

471. Miller, *Quest for God*, 173. Emphasis added

472. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 51.

473. John C. Haughey, “The Three Conversions Embedded in Personal Calling,” in *Revisiting the Idea of Vocation: Theological Explorations*, ed. John C. Haughey (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 2.

reality.”<sup>474</sup> In other words, experience in the reality of life is a fertile soil for a growing personal calling or vocation. Vocation appears not in the heavens as a supernatural place elsewhere, but on earth, through “intentionality, objectivity, meaning, and rational self-consciousness” of the subject.<sup>475</sup> Vocation is concrete and authentic. Thus, discernment is needed. Intellectual conversion is “not a matter of IQ but of refusing to act from fantasies or fears, biases or ideologies, or any other merely subjective state.”<sup>476</sup> Thus, intellectual conversion does not refer to the brilliant mind of the self, but rather to the capability of the self to approach reality in a process of knowing. For example, there could be a person who is brilliant with a high IQ score, but he or she has difficulties entering into real life. Intellectual conversion draws the self to be authentic in the reality of life, in preparation for the next step of conversion.

### Moral Conversion

*Moral conversion* is reaching value or the meaning of good; as Lonergan says, this conversion is the moving of “one’s decisions and choices from satisfaction to values.”<sup>477</sup> It shows there is a gradual spectrum, from the narrow judgment of satisfaction to the broader judgment of value. The *core* of moral conversion is *meaning* or *value*, and what is truly good. There is a shifting from satisfaction to value, “even [opting] for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict.”<sup>478</sup> In other words, the self has to discern in what

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474. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 2-3. Emphasis added.

475. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 2.

476. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 4.

477. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

478. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

direction his or her future lies. Haughey highlights that “moral conversion is the movement of the subject *from* impulsive, self-regarding acts *to* the choice of values that are self-transcending.”<sup>479</sup> Miller adds that the self has to be an authentic autonomy, which means “one must *discover and resist* one’s biases; one must grow in knowledge of one’s community and one’s world; one must *keep scrutinizing* one’s motives and scales of value; and one must remain open to the criticism and the wisdom of one’s community.”<sup>480</sup> This discovery is a lifelong process as each human being seeks value and meaning in his or her own life, both personally and communally. Thus, in finding a value, the self must be a free person, having autonomy in his or her judgment on value. Having autonomy does not mean becoming egoistic, but rather being a genuine person who performs judgments of value based on objective consideration. Both Haughey and Miller affirm that by relying on value or meaning, the self reaches maturity in his or her freedom of choice and avoids becoming a “drifter.” Miller quotes Lonergan’s statement: “The drifter has not yet found himself [or herself]; he [or she] has not yet discovered his [or her] own deed and so is content to do whatever everyone else is doing.”<sup>481</sup> In short, be yourself! This should not be confused with selfishness or subjectivism, because in the context of moral conversion, *being your own self* relies on the self’s recognition and decisions based on value, allowing personal freedom. Conversion to meaning helps the self avoid temptations caused by his or her own superficiality.

The authenticity of the self is not only a personal matter but also a social one, since there are various values, such as vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious, which are interconnected.<sup>482</sup> However, persons and communities should always be aware of their biases.

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479. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 4.

480. Miller, *Quest for God*, 170; emphasis added.

481. Miller, *Quest for God*, 170.

482. See footnote 349.



In moral conversion, there are “*terminal values* of ethics [which] are discovered through true evaluative judgments and actualized through responsible decisions and actions.”<sup>483</sup> The self chooses terminal values which are indeed good, worthwhile, and valuable in order “to live in a world where [he or] she constitutes [himself or] herself as an original value, and as someone who originates values, which in turn bring about values that are terminal.”<sup>484</sup> The terminal values are to be shared by the self with the communal life. Moral conversion is “*conversion to meaning*,” and when the self seeks the truth, he or she later will be able to transcend in his or her life actualization.<sup>485</sup>

Braman affirms, “[W]e courageously raise questions concerning our *character*; this in turn leads us to move out of the darkness of self-deception and seek the truth behind our actions, in order to ensure that there is harmony between *what we claim to be* and *what in fact we are*.”<sup>486</sup> In other words, authenticity is being tested. Humans seek to “consistently opt for *the truly worthwhile, the truly good, and the truly valuable* rather than what appears to be merely good, valuable, or worthwhile.”<sup>487</sup> Thus, terminal value is not an abstract value but rather is embedded in the self, as Braman highlights that “[t]he person as originating value is the one who is doing the choosing; [he or] she is an authentic person achieving self-transcendence through [his or] her good choices.”<sup>488</sup> These choices point to judgment, as required in moral conversion, in determining a value which is “true.”

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483. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 45.

484. Braman, *Meaning*, 66.

485. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 4. Emphasis added.

486. Braman, *Meaning*, 64; emphasis added.

487. Braman, *Meaning*, 64; emphasis added.

488. Braman, *Meaning*, 66.

Through moral conversion and the previous intellectual conversion, the reality is that the self's knowing is tested by the value beyond what is known. This is the way for the self to be authentic, because his or her judging and deciding is "beyond all personal pleasure or pragmatic advantage," and is based on the consideration: *What is truly valuable and what I should follow?*<sup>489</sup> In moral conversion, feelings play an important role as, for Lonergan, "feelings [are an] intentional response to value."<sup>490</sup> The role played by feelings functions within moral conversion as a matter of how each self may be genuine during his or her way to self-transcendence. Indeed, moral conversion is "the *inner transformation of the person* [which then] flows out to effect an *outer transformation of person* that flows out to effect an *outer transformation of the world*."<sup>491</sup> Inner and outer transformation are about the existence of human good as a fundamental process of becoming for the next step of conversion.

### Religious Conversion

Whereas intellectual conversion concerns empirical reality and moral conversion is about value and meaning, *religious conversion* is about *falling in love* or the "total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, [or] reservations."<sup>492</sup> For Lonergan, the work of love is due to "God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us."<sup>493</sup> The *core* of religious conversion is *love* and this conversion begins with *the transformation of the heart* through the act of falling in love. Miller highlights that religious

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489. Conn, "Desire for Authenticity," 38.

490. Braman, *Meaning*, 65.

491. Braman, *Meaning*, 67. Emphasis added.

492. Lonergan, *Method*, 240. Emphasis added.

493. Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

conversion begins with “a change of heart, but it is a total transformation of one’s entire life, such that all of one’s inner and outer words and deeds are augmented by the power of grace. But *while graced*, such transformed words and deeds remain to some degree a product of the person’s own conscious intentionality, his or her experience, understanding, judgment, and decision.”<sup>494</sup> The transformation of the heart is a connection between God’s grace and human action. In light of the theological perspective of Augustine and Aquinas on operative grace and cooperative grace, Lonergan states,

*Operative grace* is the replacement of the heart of stone by the heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizon of the heart of stone. *Cooperative grace* is the heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom. *Operative grace* is religious conversion. *Cooperative grace* is the effectiveness of conversion, the gradual movement towards a full and complete transformation of the whole of one’s living and feeling, one’s thoughts, words, deeds and omissions.<sup>495</sup>

Thus, religious consciousness is a step of conversion that must be followed by the next step, which is *being in love with God*, in order to make the conversion become effective and complete. According to the work of the heart, McCarthy explains,

In biblical language, operative grace turns the fallen sinner’s heart of stone into a heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19, 36:26). The heart of stone is basically in love with itself (Augustine’s *cupidas*); its effective horizon is restricted to the narrow concerns of the “fat Ego.” The heart of flesh (*caritas*), by contrast, is in love with an unknown God whom it faithfully serves but cannot see.<sup>496</sup>

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494. Miller, *Quest for God*, 154. Emphasis added.

495. Lonergan, *Method*, 241. Emphasis added. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 18. Duffy argues that the operative and cooperative functions can be found in grace as *motus* and *habitus*. Grace as a *motus* “can be operative, moving the will to interior action, or cooperative, moving the will to exterior action; similarly, grace as *habitus* can be operative, effecting justification, or cooperative, functioning as principle of meritorious acts” (Duffy, *Dynamics of Grace*, 161).

496. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 48.

The fullness of religious conversion will “*produce a being-in-love that affects the whole person on all levels of consciousness.*”<sup>497</sup> In other words, religious conversion is “*conversion to love.*”<sup>498</sup> Religious conversion influences human experience, understanding, judging, and deciding, all due to concrete love in daily life.

Miller highlights that, in discussing religious conversion, Lonergan “identifies the operative element of religious conversion with *sanctifying grace*.”<sup>499</sup> Religious conversion or *sanctifying grace* is “not simply a single moment, but a long process” that is supported by both operative and cooperative grace.<sup>500</sup> *Sanctifying grace* is grounded in “*the world of interiority.*”<sup>501</sup> The *sanctifying grace* has a divinizing aspect in religious conversion that manifests “in everyday life in numerous ways, for *being in love with God* transforms one’s whole way of being in the world.”<sup>502</sup> The divine aspect or the Ultimate Reality’s work becomes the essential part of religious conversion. Miller mentions that Lonergan also uses the term “religious word” as the fruit of religious conversion.<sup>503</sup> One basic notion that must be made clear is that Lonergan distinguishes between the terms *religious experience* and *religious word*. *Religious experience* refers to “a *religious ‘consciousness.’*” It occurs not on our first level of consciousness, as other experiences do, since it begins with God’s gift of love, and ‘the gift of God’s love occupies *the fourth and the highest level of human*

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497. Miller, *Quest for God*, 152. Emphasis added.

498. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 6.

499. Miller, *Quest for God*, 154. Emphasis added. See Lonergan, *Method*, 107.

500. Miller, *Quest for God*, 154.

501. Lonergan, *Method*, 107. Emphasis added.

502. Miller, *Quest for God*, 155. Emphasis added.

503. Miller, *Quest for God*, 155. See Lonergan, *Method*, 112-5.

*intentional consciousness*. It takes over the peak of the soul.’’<sup>504</sup> Meanwhile, *religious word* refers to “any expression of religious *meaning* or religious *value*. Its carrier may be intersubjectivity, or art, or symbol, or language, or the remembered and portrayed lives or deeds or achievements of individuals or classes or groups.”<sup>505</sup> Indeed, religious conversion is mediated by *religious experience* and *religious word*. Lonergan defines religious experience in reference to religious consciousness that leads to *being in love with God* as “a dynamic state” that works as an ongoing human experience.<sup>506</sup> Miller highlights that, for Lonergan, the term *religious* is

[M]ore than any one such organization or even all such organizations. It pertains to “a reality that transcends the reality of this world,” a being that is not virtually unconditioned but absolutely unconditioned, a value by which all values are measured, a love that knows no bounds. In our unrestricted desires to know and to choose, we seek the only thing that can fulfill our desire, namely a truly unrestricted, transcendental object. That being, value, love, and transcendent object is God, though it may be known by many names in many traditions.<sup>507</sup>

At this point, religious conversion opens the possibility of sharing self-transcendence between various cultures and spiritual traditions in order to build humanity.

Since religious conversion has a meaning of *conversion to love*, it draws another meaning that religious conversion is *affective conversion*: “the transformation of our deepest life of feeling. Without the radical reorientation of our passionate desire from obsession with self-needs to concern for the needs of others, there is no affective conversion.”<sup>508</sup> Affective conversion refers to the *eros* of human spirit for the capacity of self-transcendence; Conn

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504. Miller, *Quest for God*, 152. See Lonergan, *Method*, 107. Emphasis added.

505. Lonergan, *Method*, 112. Emphasis added.

506. Miller, *Quest for God*, 151.

507. Miller, *Quest for God*, 151-2.

508. Conn, “Desire for Authenticity,” 53.

describes, “Affective conversion, therefore, is the concrete possibility of overcoming moral importance, of not only being able to make a decision to commit oneself to a course of action or direction of life judged worthwhile and personally appropriate, but of being able to execute that decision over the long haul against serious obstacles.”<sup>509</sup> Through religious conversion as affective conversion, the self has deep passion and strong commitment that uphold *being in love* as authenticity of the self.

For Lonergan, religious conversion as a conversion to love cannot neglect the role of human nature and God through grace, as McCarthy highlights: “By nature, we have an *eros* for union with God; through divine grace we can fall in love with God in an unrestricted manner. The interior gift of God’s love, freely given to all, is a *supernatural* principle consciously operating within the life of the incarnate subject.”<sup>510</sup> In love, there is an intersection between human and God. Thus, religious conversion occurs “when the existential subject responds to the gift of God’s love in a wholehearted way, when *being in love with God* becomes the orientating principle of her [or his] life.”<sup>511</sup> Religious conversion cultivates self-transcendence to be concrete in love; love is not merely an activity but is a way of being. Religious conversion leads the self as an individual to be a pilgrim, walking with others by concreting love into action. However, conversion is a lifelong process of human achievement, with being in love as the fulfilment of self-transcendence.

In the role of self-transcendence, conversion is a challenging process for the subject to become self-authentic, especially in his or her struggle with “bias or scotoma, a blind spot, which causes the subject to be alienated from adequate knowing, appropriate doing, and life-

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509. Conn, “Desire for Authenticity,” 53.

510. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 47.

511. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 48. Emphasis added. See Lonergan, *Method*, 105-7.

giving loving.”<sup>512</sup> The self struggles against bias and moves towards being an aspect of human good for others and for God by conversion in all levels: intellectual, moral, and religious. Miller highlights,

Intellectual conversion focuses on the truth grasped in *cognitive self-transcendence*; moral conversion pertains to values affirmed and realized in *moral or “real” self-transcendence*; and religious conversion brings one to a “total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the realization of human values, or in the orientation [a human] adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal.”<sup>513</sup>

Through conversion, as an interior process of opening to the insight of the self, the human good “becomes realized not only as a possibility, but also as responsibility.”<sup>514</sup> By nature, the self has the capacity for self-transcendence, but by religious conversion, the self is able to become the incarnate subject through *being in love with God* as the manifestation of life responsibility. Life responsibility is a holistic capacity of self-transcendence.

In light of responsibility to others, Snedden affirms, “Conversion means more than a change of horizon, it means beginning to belong to a new social group, or at least belonging in a new way.”<sup>515</sup> Conversion begins with personal environment, then moves forward to communal environment. Moreover, conversion is not merely changing directions, but transformation, as Lonergan stresses:

[Conversion] is not merely a change or even a development; rather it is *a radical transformation* on which follows, on all levels of living, an interlocked series of changes and developments. What hitherto was unnoticed becomes vivid and present. What had been of no concern becomes a matter of high import. So great a change in one’s apprehension and one’s values accompanies no less a change in oneself, in one’s relations to other persons, and in one’s relations to God.<sup>516</sup>

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512. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 71. See Lonergan, *Insight*, 214-20.

513. Miller, *Quest for God*, 168.

514. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 72.

515. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 85.

516. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13. Emphasis added.

Conversion as the path of the incarnate subject is a radical transformation, in which the self is sustained by the transformation of value, and generates an authentic living by being in love with God and others. Lonergan renews a theological foundation of conversion which consists “not in objective statements, but in subjective reality.”<sup>517</sup> Conversion as the path of the incarnate subject pinpoints a subjective experience for an authentic human being. Thus, by emphasizing subjective experience instead of objective statements or doctrine, Lonergan’s notion of conversion proposes a significant contribution for a pluralistic world beyond doctrinal debates. William Johnston highlights that “[Lonergan’s notion of] conversion is the basis *not only* of Christianity *but* of all religion. Conversion ... coincides with living religion.”<sup>518</sup> Authenticity requires a comprehensive conversion of the self as a new way of being a mature human.

#### Human Authenticity: Being in Love with God

In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan firmly states, “I have conceived *being in love with God* as an ultimate fulfilment of [a human’s] *capacity for self-transcendence*; and this view of religion is sustained when God is conceived as the supreme fulfilment of the transcendental notions, as supreme intelligence, truth, reality, righteousness, goodness.”<sup>519</sup> This fulfilment is achieved by the self through conversion, intellectually, morally, and religiously. Lonergan takes into account the religious aspects or the role of God in human

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517. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 14.

518. Johnston, “*Arise, My Love ...*”: *Mysticism for a New Era* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Book 2000), 39.

519. Lonergan, *Method*, 111. Emphasis added.



authenticity, as McCarthy quotes: “*An authentic humanism is profoundly religious.*”<sup>520</sup> Lonergan strongly stresses, “Without *faith*, without *the eyes of love*, the world is too evil for God to be good, for a good God to exist. But faith recognizes that *God grants [human beings] their freedom*, that [God] wills them *to be persons and not just [God’s] automata*, that [God] calls them to the higher authenticity that overcomes evil with good.”<sup>521</sup> Human authenticity is about maturity based on a particular kind of *faith as the eyes of love*. Thus *being in love with God* is a product of authentic faith, which is due to supportive faith, instead of “aberrant” faith, which causes destruction toward humanity.<sup>522</sup> Reflecting on the contemporary era, there are great figures, such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Nelson Mandela, and the Dalai Lama, among others, who have authenticity, which can be seen through their individual conversions and social transformations.

As an African-American Baptist pastor, Martin Luther King, Jr. transcended his life beyond the boundary of his church walls to address societal issues of race in the US. As a victim of racism, King fought against racial inequality through a nonviolent movement. For years, King endeavored to make real his dream of equality, where none is objectified because of his or her skin color. Similar to King’s struggle against racism, Nelson Mandela, a South African politician and philanthropist, spearheaded a revolution against the institutionalized white supremacy and racial segregation called apartheid. Mandela promoted African nationalism and cultivated racial reconciliation between South Africans and colonial whites through a peace building movement. For Mandela, reconciliation was the only way to transform society in South Africa, because he was combatting both white domination over black people and other people of color, as well as black domination over white people and

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520. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 181.

521. Lonergan, *Method*, 117. Emphasis added.

522. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 206. See Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

other people of color. Meanwhile, in Asia, the Dalai Lama, a Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, continues to practice and promote the Bodhisattva of compassion as the value and tradition for Tibetans' social lives. The Dalai Lama promotes humility, peace, and compassion for the understanding of and respect among different faiths of the world. He also condemns the repression of the Chinese government. The Dalai Lama is a controversial Buddhist spiritual leader in the eyes of the government of the Republic of China, which has authority over Tibetan territory and which dislikes Tibetan culture. King, Mandela, and the Dalai Lama are examples of human authenticity through self-transcendence, as their personal conversions have made manifest social transformation for hope and peaceful life.

McCarthy highlights that to be a human with genuine authenticity “requires far more than acknowledging the dark side of human existence. Epistemic authenticity requires a *radical openness to truth and reality* in all of its forms.”<sup>523</sup> This radical openness becomes the fundamental basis to know who God is in the work of *being in love with God*. For Lonergan, God is “the first agent of every event and emergence and development” because God is the sole creator and the sustainer of creation, which is inherently good.<sup>524</sup> “God is good” and good as the existence of God directly influence human beings to participate in goodness.<sup>525</sup> In other words, God is “the perfect and eternal act of unrestricted understanding and love” that flows into human life in the world.<sup>526</sup> At this point, Lonergan’s theological perspective of God is grounded on the creation story of Genesis, especially before the fall. This perspective influences how Lonergan sees the relationship between God and humanity as more positive and powerful in the way of transcendence. Another of Lonergan’s theological perspectives of

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523. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 211.

524. Lonergan, *Insight*, 709.

525. Lonergan, *Method*, 109.

526. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 229.

God is based on the life of Jesus as the incarnation of God, as Miller highlights: “Because God became man, the love of God for God became the love of God for man.”<sup>527</sup> Thus, both the creation story and the incarnation of Jesus show that the way to know God is through the relationship and practice of love. *God is love* is the fundamental doctrine of God for Lonergan.

Discussing love, Lonergan points to all relationships in different contexts: friend, family, community, country, and God. In the context of family, Lonergan highlights “the love of intimacy” between husband and wife, and between parent and children.<sup>528</sup> The sense of intimacy is also in the reciprocal love between God and human beings when Lonergan refers to the flooding of God’s love into the human heart through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) and the wholeness of human love to God (Mark 12:30).<sup>529</sup> The intimacy between God and human beings creates mutual trust and openness through consciousness, as well as concern for the other’s wellbeing. Tad Dunne highlights, “Lonergan’s interest shifted from the question of how we ‘attain God’ (*attingitur Deus*) toward how we are in love with God.”<sup>530</sup> The emphasis is on building a relationship with God as the way to truly to know God, instead of the description of what or who God is. Dunn adds, “Lonergan’s mature doctrine is that God’s love is double. It is the outer word in our history and the inner word in our hearts.”<sup>531</sup> Because love of God still exists, to know God one cannot just look at doctrines which were produced by specific persons in certain times and contexts. Instead, knowing God is achieved

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527. Miller, *Quest for God*, 186.

528. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

529. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

530. Tad Dunne, “Being in Love,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995): 175.

531. Dunne, “Being in Love,” 175.

through the daily intentional consciousness precepts: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. Lonergan proposes a dynamic faith based on praxis unlimited by a narrow doctrine's understanding. As McCarthy notes, however, humans' intellects are finite, and "our understanding imperfect and limited, our judgments subject to error and correction, we can discover *that* God exists without knowing *what* God truly is."<sup>532</sup> Lonergan distinctly points out, "*God is not an object*" that draws human beings to come to the "transcendent mystery" or "*the cloud of unknowing*."<sup>533</sup> For Lonergan, God should be known as the "transcendent mystery."<sup>534</sup> The transcendent mystery is an open term for all religions and beliefs, including local wisdom, because God is beyond a name or a concept. As the first agent of the universe, God should be understood above and beyond doctrine and dogma. To know is just one step to a broader understanding of who God is through self-transcendence. *Being in love with God* means to walk in the mystery of God and further into love as the way to know who God is.

Miller acknowledges that Lonergan's notion of authenticity is built on Aristotle's, Augustine's, and Aquinas' discussion of "virtue, love, and friendship."<sup>535</sup> Lonergan's thought on virtue is based on Aristotle's idea of the "virtuous person," which is similar to Augustine's statement that "if one loves God, one may do as one pleases."<sup>536</sup> This means that a genuine or pure love does not exist because of a rule; rather, it exists due to value. As Miller notes,

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532. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 229.

533. Lonergan, *Method*, 342. Emphasis added. Lonergan points to William Johnston's *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing* (266, footnotes: 278, 342).

534. Lonergan, *Method*, 342.

535. Miller, *Quest for God*, 75.

536. Miller, *Quest for God*, 75.

“virtues are good habits that orient a person to good acts.”<sup>537</sup> According to Jeremy Wilkins, Aquinas argues that “the virtues are ‘operative’ habits. They are open, flexible, creative, and self-transcending: in this sense, the very opposite of routine.”<sup>538</sup> A person’s virtue conducts the self to do good things in his or her life, as Aristotle points out: “Virtue has to do with action or conduct (*praxis*) rather than production (*poiesis*).”<sup>539</sup> Lonergan’s thought on love is influenced by Thomas Aquinas’ idea of the love of God, or “‘charity,’ [which] is a virtue and ‘the mother and root of all virtues.’”<sup>540</sup> Miller mentions that charity is a “supernatural love with both healing and elevating effects. It is a radical, revolutionary love” in the midst of biased and egoistic lifestyles.<sup>541</sup> Charity manifests “a redemptive role in society” through self-transcendence.<sup>542</sup> Again, Aristotle’s knowledge impacts Lonergan’s thoughts on the key terms: *benevolence* and *beneficence*, as well as genuine collaboration and true love.<sup>543</sup> These are rooted in Aristotle’s idea of “the mutual love ... called ‘friendship.’”<sup>544</sup> Friendship has the meaning of genuineness, pureness, and perfection in relationship. Lonergan constructs the classic idea of virtue, where love and friendship are bound together, into the fulfilment of authenticity through self-transcendence as a way of life for social collaboration. Snedden highlights that, from the point of view of the loving human subject, “Lonergan sees love [in

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537. Miller, *Quest for God*, 76.

538. Jeremy D. Wilkins, “Grace and Growth: Aquinas, Lonergan, and the Problematic of Habitual Grace,” *Theological Studies* 72 (2011): 735.

539. Wilkins, “Grace and Growth,” 735.

540. Miller, *Quest for God*, 75.

541. Miller, *Quest for God*, 160.

542. Miller, *Quest for God*, 160.

543. Lonergan, *Method*, 37, 104.

544. Miller, *Quest for God*, 76.

friendship] as the principle of union between different subjects; love unites them in pursuit of a common goal or as the ground of their exultation together in the attainment of the good that is love's end."<sup>545</sup> Thus, authenticity is about virtue, love, and friendship, which manifest in pure and concrete subject-to-subject relationships with others and God.

Moreover, Lonergan acknowledges that "mutual love is the intertwining of two lives. It transforms an 'I' and 'thou' into a 'we' so intimate, so secure, so permanent, that each attends, imagines, thinks, plans, feels, speaks, acts in concern for both."<sup>546</sup> *Being in love with God* is not only *making a room* for God, but also *making a space* for others. In social life, Lonergan proposes a basic understanding that "intersubjectivity appears not only in spontaneous mutual aid but also in some of the ways in which feelings are communicated."<sup>547</sup> Intersubjectivity is more than a physical action. It is a "psychic contagion," which points to sharing between one and another's emotions or feelings.<sup>548</sup> Intersubjectivity, as the performance of *being in love with God*, is about falling in love, affection, and "passionateness of being."<sup>549</sup> This passion is then communicated to others. Conn adds, "[I]f feeling, the locus of value, gives our conscious life its mass and momentum, as Lonergan says, the radical transformation of feeling in affective conversion gives the power of sustained self-transcendence, of authentic living."<sup>550</sup> The "we" is not only physical presence but also the metaphysical presence of being. Lonergan stresses that "fellow-feeling" and

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545. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 24.

546. Lonergan, *Method*, 33.

547. Lonergan, *Method*, 57.

548. Lonergan, *Method*, 58.

549. Dunne, "Being in Love," 164.

550. Conn, "Desire for Authenticity," 54.

“intersubjectivity” are the foundation of community.<sup>551</sup> To build communal life, sensitivity toward others is required. On this point, Lonergan’s interpretation of intersubjectivity is “based on knowledge and self-surrender, rather than power and egoism.”<sup>552</sup> *Being in love with God* is a universal and inclusive value for intersubjectivity or fellow-feeling, which will create a world better for all.

Wilkins highlights, “*Being in love* is not an event but *a state* ... The state is understood, not in any individual events of whatever kind, but rather by grasping the regularities in events over time.”<sup>553</sup> Wilkins gives an example of being in love as a state by referring to a mother’s love for her children, which exists consistently, regardless of time or circumstance. This brings to mind an Indonesian proverb: ‘*the love of a child is as long as the rod, the love of a mother is along the road,*’ meaning that in comparison to her child’s love, a mother’s love is never-ending and immeasurable. For example, a child may do something bad, such as committing a crime that causes the child to be jailed, but the mother’s love will remain even in the midst of disappointment, tears, and sorrow. The jail may imprison the child, but the mother’s love for the child cannot to be imprisoned by the jail. Love is not an event, but a state of being. *Being in love with God* as a dynamic state refers to the dynamism of intentional consciousness in which being in love is to be involved in an ongoing process of personal growth through intellectual, moral, and religious conversion.

Lonergan emphasizes that *being in love with God* is “a peak dynamic state [that refers to] one’s whole heart and whole soul, and all one’s mind and all one’s strength.”<sup>554</sup> Lonergan bases this perspective on the Greatest Commandment of Jesus found in Matthew 22:37-39:

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551. Lonergan, *Method*, 58-9.

552. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 81. See Lonergan, *Method*, 105, 240.

553. Wilkins, “Grace and Growth,” 732. Emphasis added.

554. Lonergan, “Religious Commitment,” 57.

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” Referring to the social context of the text, in society at that time, people knew and practiced loving others, but the practice of love was based on the qualifications and limitations of social groups. In the text, Jesus proposes a new way of love which is beyond any qualifications and boundaries: social communities of Jews and Gentiles, and the religious groups of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the lay people. Moreover, Jesus stresses the binding together of love to God, love to others, and love to the self. For Jesus, love as love, without any qualifications, is the only way to restore humanity. On this theological perspective of love, Lonergan argues that “*being in love with God* is being in love without any limits or qualifications or conditions or reservations,” as Jesus taught.<sup>555</sup>

Wilkins points out a dimension of love: *agape* for *being in love with God*, which “does not replace but does take us beyond our ‘mere’ humanity, not only healing but also subsuming (or, as the Scholastics put it, ‘elevating’) the whole flow of our conscious operations toward a new and impossible finality, friendship with God and all things in God.”<sup>556</sup> Through *agape*, the self is able to love beyond boundaries, as Lonergan proposes that *being in love with God* is a fulfilment of the capacity for self-transcendence in humanity. This self-transcendence is precisely what *agape* is. In line with Wilkins, McCarthy highlights that “what Christians call *agape* or *caritas*, enables each person to share directly in God’s very life.”<sup>557</sup> *Agape* or *caritas* creates incarnate subjectivity, removes all bias from the self, and ensures that the self’s love is “not merely of justice, but of self-sacrificial love.”<sup>558</sup> Thus,

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555. Lonergan, *Method*, 105-6.

556. Wilkins, “Grace and Growth,” 733. Emphasis added.

557. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 251.

558. Miller, *Quest for God*, 160.



divine love is not only freely given by God, but can also be shared by the self toward all beings as a calling.

Finally, authenticity is *a universal calling for humanity in daily life through being in love with God*. Authenticity is a lifelong process, personally and communally. Moreover, authenticity is an appropriate human way of life for “being-in-the-world.”<sup>559</sup> Like the purpose of the Great Commandment of Jesus, it is not a call for the ivory tower of faith but a call of love for humanity, where self-transcendence is manifested in daily life.

### Mystical Consciousness in Ordinary Life

Mystical consciousness in Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence must be examined through his concepts on operative grace and cooperative grace, a *mediated immediacy* in the transcendental process of the subject. On the concept of operative grace and cooperative grace, Lonergan defines the collaboration between the transformation of the heart from the heart of stone to the heart of flesh and the effectiveness of the heart’s transformation manifesting into concrete action. The collaboration itself shows the integrative movement between the self and God as a “transforming union that is characterized by the permanent union with God,” as Gordon Rixon explained.<sup>560</sup> This transforming union works through the daily self-transcendental consciousness by the norm operative in each level of intentional consciousness: *be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, and be in love*. The transforming union refers to the changing of horizon, as Lonergan describes that a new horizon is “a consciousness dynamic state of love, joy and peace, that manifests itself in acts

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559. Braman, *Meaning*, 49.

560. Gordon Rixon, “Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism,” *Theological Studies* 62 (2001): 486.

of kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22).”<sup>561</sup> There is an integration between God’s love and humans’ love, which then creates the new horizon. Rixon highlights that “the fulfilment of the transcendental notions, the realization of the human person’s unrestricted capacity for self-transcendence becomes a principle of further (supernatural) activity.”<sup>562</sup> Thus, in the transforming union, *the natural daily consciousness becomes the supernatural action* through the transformed self-presence of the human subject as the key of mystical experience. However, for Lonergan, “the interiority of consciousness [is] *experience of the subject*.”<sup>563</sup> In light of operative grace and cooperative grace, the natural and supernatural are embedded and blended within self-transcendence, as part of the mystical consciousness of the subjective presence.

As I explored previously, when discussing the basic foundation of transcendental consciousness, Lonergan distinguishes between *the data of sense* and *the data of consciousness*. The data of sense is only the first step in the process of objectivity; the data of consciousness is needed to achieve self-transcendence through life experience. This data of consciousness comes into being through the inner direct response, which is called a *mediated immediacy*. Louis Roy highlights, “Reality can be accessed solely through sets of operations comprised of experiences, memories, questions, insights, and judgments. Such operations are the constituents of mediated immediacy.”<sup>564</sup> The process of mediated immediacy plays an essential role of consciousness in self-transcendence as the intersection between natural

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561. Lonergan, *Method*, 106.

562. Rixon, “Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism,” 490.

563. Byrne, “Consciousness,” 144.

564. Louis Roy, *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), 42.

experience and religious experience, affirming that “life [is] a ‘mediated immediacy.’”<sup>565</sup> The mediated immediacy, or “light by which” one sees, is an essential aspect of mystical consciousness in which the mystic arrives at the “process of transformation” to authenticity in his or her mind and life.<sup>566</sup> The mediated immediacy leads the self to have mystical experiences through the intersection between natural and divine aspects in the intentional consciousness precepts. For example, the self sees the poor on the street. This experience is not about the meaning of poverty as the data of sense; instead, through the mediated immediacy, the self is evoked by consciousness to be self-present in the poor, as the data of consciousness. This experience elicits the self into being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, as the self is immersed in the inner eye of love which turns to his or her own self, to others, and to God. Thus, through the data of sense, the self has an ordinary experience, and gradually and spontaneously, the self enters the prolongation of ordinary experience into mystical consciousness. Roy highlights, “*Mystical experience occurs in an objectless consciousness* and yet includes more. The ‘more’ is the element of infinite lovingness.”<sup>567</sup> Mystical experience refers to the subjective consciousness and does not belong to any mediation. The focus is not the exterior object (the poor) for example, but the interiority of the self (the consciousness that responds attentively to the poor). William Johnston affirms,

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565. Rixon, “Bernard Lonergan and Mysticism,” 492. In the footnote, Rixon adds that in the 1979 Method in Theology Seminar at Boston College, Lonergan gave a response to a question by writing: “My ‘mediated immediacy’ is different from the Scholastic view that beatific vision is immediate. Immediate in the Scholastic sense is the denial of an intermediary object between the act and the object. *Mediated immediacy* does not posit an object between the act and the object but posits a reflection that understands the nature of the act and its relation to God” (Lecture Notes, LRI, A2860). This affirms that for Lonergan, mediated immediacy is about unification of natural and divine aspects in the transcendental consciousness. Emphasis added.

566. McGinn, *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, xvii.

567. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 50. Emphasis added.

“*This is an experience not of the river nor of the water fall but of my true self.*”<sup>568</sup> Mediated immediacy becomes the foundation of the totality of the subjective presence and the true self as a mystical subjectivity.

The subjective presence immersed in mystical consciousness is not only about the transformation of the self, but also about the self’s openness to God’s infinite lovingness or steadfast love, experienced through entering the *cloud of unknowing* as “consciousness-beyond, or ‘meta-consciousness.’”<sup>569</sup> Bernard McGinn adds that the *cloud of unknowing* as mystical meta-consciousness, which is traditionally identified as a negative or *apophatic* spiritual way, becomes an aspect of Lonergan’s transcendental method. The metaphor of the *cloud of unknowing* “is not mere, or ‘ignorant’ ignorance, but the ‘learned ignorance’ [Augustine’s *docta ignorantia*] that is the product of intense efforts to thematize the limits of all knowing.”<sup>570</sup> In mysticism, learned ignorance is the way of understanding that God is an unknowable infinity within daily human experiences. This understanding also refers to Lonergan’s thought on the transcendent mystery as the self’s gift toward an unknown. Lonergan says that an “orientation toward an unknown refers to ‘absoluteness: it is with all one’s heart and all one’s soul and with all one’s mind and all one’s strength. It is, then, an orientation to what is transcendent in lovable-ness and, when that is unknown, it is an orientation to transcendent mystery.’”<sup>571</sup> Thus, living in the *cloud of unknowing* does not mean that the self becomes disoriented with his or her self and with God, but rather that living in the *cloud of unknowing* is entering into the mystery of God’s love. In light of God’s

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568. William Johnston, *The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 63.

569. McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness,” 47.

570. McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness,” 53.

571. Lonergan, *Method*, 341.

love, the mystery is not the absence of God, but another form of God's presence. Lonergan mentions Johnston's thought on the *cloud of unknowing*.<sup>572</sup> One of Johnston's thoughts is that, when entering the unrestricted love of God,

[The self] enters a *cloud of unknowing* or a dark night ... it *turns into naked faith, dark faith, pure faith. And this is mysticism*. It is naked because it is no longer clothed in thoughts and images and concepts; it is dark because it does not see clearly; it is pure because it is unmixed with concepts which (when applied to the divine) always contain an element of imperfection. It differs from ordinary faith only in the intensity of its nakedness, its darkness and its purity.<sup>573</sup>

The *cloud of unknowing* rest on the foundation that "God is a loving presence," even though the mystic cannot see God.<sup>574</sup> Thus, the basic substance is the undoubtable love between the mystic and God or the Ultimate Reality. In other words, the way of the self as a mystic in knowing God is through loving.

For mystics, to see God is to see the unseen God in the mystical pursuit of God in the journey of life. On this point, Lonergan relies on traditional mystical theology which affirms that God can be loved even though God cannot be known. The path of the *cloud of unknowing* is to come to "know God by unknowing."<sup>575</sup> This affirms that mystical consciousness is a way to see God not through the physical eyes, but rather through the eyes of love. There is "no apprehension of God as object here; rather the divine presence becomes active in the soul's ground of awareness. So too *there is no loving God as an object of desire*, but only a co-presence of infinite divine love. This new affective state is conscious, that is,

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572. Lonergan, *Method*, 342. See especially Footnote 7 at the bottom of this page in *Method*.

573. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 66.

574. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 67.

575. Johnston, *Mystical Theology: The Science of Love* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995), 51.

present to the subject, but not yet explicitly known or objectified.”<sup>576</sup> There is no doubt of God for the mystic, because there is no separation between knowing and loving.<sup>577</sup> Johnston advises, “Let your longing relentlessly beat upon the *cloud of unknowing* that lies between you and your God.”<sup>578</sup> The *cloud of unknowing* is not about separation but rather a deep consciousness of God. Lonergan mentions that “the love of God also is penetrated with awe.”<sup>579</sup> That is what is called “the unitive *cloud of unknowing* [which] enables a renewed appreciation of creation and participation in world process. The human person is purified and transformed not only to find God in all things but to find all things in God.”<sup>580</sup> The divine mystery transcends any condition or circumstance of daily life. This means that for the self, the mystical life is not an event but a way of life, which is followed through both knowing and unknowing.

For Lonergan, interiority<sup>581</sup> plays an important role in mystical consciousness, as Roy highlights “the realm of transcendence or religious interiority as the furtherance of ordinary

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576. McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness,” 51. Emphasis added.

577. McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness,” 52.

578. Johnston, *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counseling: An Enduring Classic of Christian Mystical Experience* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1973), 21.

579. Lonergan, *Method*, 111. Lonergan mentions the way of God’s mystery by referring to Ignatius Loyola, Karl Rahner, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf Otto with his term *mysterium fascinans et tremendum* (106).

580. Rixon, “Bernard Lonergan,” 491.

581. See Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 42-3: “[Interiority] is not necessarily religious. Although it can become religious as soon as it acknowledges a relationship with the transcendent, human interiority is in itself secular, since its interactions begin with finite realities. Human interiority encompasses both the consciousness that accompanies all our acts and states, and the consciousness that accompanies our openness to the infinite.” This inclusion of both secular and religious interiorities becomes a basic foundation for mysticism as the inclusive source in various religions, beliefs, and local wisdoms around the world.

interiority. For [Lonergan], mystical consciousness is the prolongation of ordinary life.”<sup>582</sup>

Furthermore, Roy explains,

[O]rdinary consciousness is horizontal; it consists in a presence to the world and to the self. Mystical consciousness is vertical; it finds the Mystery in the depths of the self. [Both horizontal and vertical] may coexist and even intermingle. Mystical consciousness enters ordinary consciousness, sometimes causing interference, but usually enriching it. Mystical consciousness gives ordinary consciousness a special quality.<sup>583</sup>

Mystical life is not the separation of the extraordinary from the ordinary but rather the extraordinary absorbed into ordinary life through intentional consciousness. Thus, mystical consciousness occurs in daily life through the work of interiority in self-transcendence. Lonergan creates a new mystical theology based on *interiority as mystical consciousness*. Mary Frohlich states that “interiority [is] a methodological principle for spirituality [which has] three major implications ... The first concerns what we know; the second concerns how we know; the third concerns how we deal with events of ‘unknowing.’”<sup>584</sup> Moreover, Frohlich affirms that “Lonergan’s notion of interiority is important for the study of spirituality ... because it deals exactly with ‘the living and concrete human person in dynamic transformation toward the fullness of life.’”<sup>585</sup> In other words, through interiority, a person enters the mystery of life in order to love. In line with Frohlich, on the correlation between personal authenticity and spirituality, Daniel A. Helminiak highlights that the spirituality of authenticity “centers on human spirit [consciousness] and its implication for human living ... is an understanding of life in terms of a transcendent dimension ... it presents a vision of

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582. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 124.

583. Roy, *Engaging the Thought of Bernard Lonergan* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016), 150.

584. Mary Frohlich, “Critical Interiority,” *Spiritus* 7 (2007): 79.

585. Frohlich, “Critical Interiority,” 78.

humanity as inherently involved in something beyond the spatial-temporal world.”<sup>586</sup> This highlights two things: first, self-authenticity is a life long journey based on the work of interiority as the methodology of spirituality. Second, self-authenticity relies on ordinary life, which means spirituality is not separate from everyday life and is not a special part of human activity, such as meditation or prayer, but rather *is* the whole life. Thus, *being in love with God* is the mystical way in ordinary life as the fulfilment of self-transcendence.

### Conclusion

The quotation in the introduction of this chapter shows the essence of Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence. As I explored above, for Lonergan, self-transcendence relies on consciousness as the subjective presence and on an unrestricted desire to know. Self-transcendence is the process of sublation, in which the self becomes the operator of intentional consciousness in experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, respectively. The self builds consciousness as the process of authenticity for self-transcendence. Self-transcendence is a form of self-fulfilment which occurs “in our effective response to the radical desire of the human spirit for meaning, truth, value, and love.”<sup>587</sup> Because self-transcendence is a dynamic state of being, the self needs to undergo a radical transformation through the role of intellectual, moral, and religious conversions to reach fulfilment as an incarnate subject by *being in love with God*. All three conversions may take place on any of the four levels as the self reaches radical love as the mystical way of living in the world. *Being in love with God* is a mystical way in daily

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586. Daniel A. Helminiak, *The Human Core of Spirituality: Mind as Psyche and Spirit* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 34.

587. Conn, “Self-Transcendence,” 324.



life through the work of interiority. In short, self-transcendence, which is based on love, is a mystical way.

Self-transcendence bridges borders of religious and cultural identities and builds human relationships for peaceful living. *Being in love with God* is the insight of lived experience in which people can celebrate God's presence as the "transcendent mystery," and share life's stories with each other as pilgrims journeying through the pluralistic world.<sup>588</sup> Self-transcendence emphasizes life's openness or *being naked* to the self, others, and the Ultimate Mystery as a way of intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity becomes the point of departure for interspirituality, as I explored in Chapter 2. Interspirituality is not a homogenous superspirituality; rather, it is a determination of the treasures of various traditions. Additionally, only mystics can become truly interspiritual through the process of self-transcendence. Within the next chapters, I will discuss self-transcendence in the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram.

"What is transcendent is no finite thing."<sup>589</sup>  
- Bernard Lonergan

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588. Lonergan, *Method*, 342.

589. Lonergan, "Religious Commitment," 62.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Mystical Way of Mother Teresa and Lonergan's Notion of Self-Transcendence

#### Introduction

“By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, I am an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the Heart of Jesus.”<sup>590</sup>  
- Mother Teresa

In this chapter, I will discuss the intersection between the mystical way of Mother Teresa and Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence in relation to Mother Teresa's authenticity as shown in the quotation above. In the first part, I will explore Mother Teresa's life journey as an Albanian who came to Calcutta, India to be a Loreto sister in the educational mission. During her life, Mother Teresa was influenced by Carmelite spirituality, especially that of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, who was her spiritual patroness. Calcutta as “the dark holes of the poor” inspired Mother Teresa and caused her to transcend her work as a teacher. “I thirst” is the core of Mother Teresa's second vocation, or “the call within a call,” as her desire to satiate the crucified Jesus through charity for the poorest of the poor. Mother Teresa reformed charity, one of the cardinal values in Christianity, to be a universal value and to be practiced through radical love, which was the mystical way of the Missionaries of Charity.

In the second part, I will analyze the correlation between the mystical journey of Mother Teresa, and Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence, as discussed in the previous chapter. I will focus especially on the conversion process: intellectual conversion, moral

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590. Bill Donohue, *Unmasking Mother Teresa's Critics* (Manchester NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2016), 4.

conversion, and religious conversion. Lonergan's notion of conversion is the core of an ongoing process of self-transcendence in which the subjective presence converts the self into reality, meaning, and love. This conversion worked through Mother Teresa's consciousness precepts—experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding—which drew her to authenticity by *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*.

### Time and Place: The Context of Mother Teresa

As I described in Chapter 2, based on Schneiders' perspective, spirituality as a *capacity for self-transcendence* should be approached by exploring one's lived experience-based context, because spirituality is not about an abstract but a concrete life-project and falls within a particular cultural context. In line with Schneiders' approaches of historical, theological, and anthropological contexts, Alister E. McGrath lists three variables in his book *Christian Spirituality: history, theology, and personality*. Both Schneiders and McGrath emphasize the "*process of correlation*" of the approaches, or the variables in order to determine the type of spirituality of the individual figure.<sup>591</sup> One's personal location and situation shape personal and communal horizons. The process of correlation affirms that spirituality does not occur in a vacuum relationship between only "God and me." Rather, spirituality arises and develops from a context of time and place, and, at the same time, as a response to the context itself. To trace the lived experience, personally and communally, is a fundamental aspect in finding the authenticity of the spiritual figure. Now, I want to explore

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591. McGrath, *Christian Spirituality*, 9. McGrath explains that the three variables in spirituality are: history, referring to an individual historical circumstance; theology, referring to Christian tradition; and personal, referring to a personal or communal situation which relates to psychological and sociological factors. The variables are linked to each other (10-2).

the early context of Mother Teresa in Albania and Calcutta, before she established the Missionaries of Charity.

### ***Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu***

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in Skopje, Albania on August 26, 1910. Gonxha was Mother Teresa's nickname, which means "flower bud."<sup>592</sup> She was raised in a faithful Catholic family, who regularly practiced daily prayers at home as well as at Mass at the Sacred Heart Catholic church. When Gonxha was a teenager, she was impressed by the stories of Jesuit priests who were missionaries in India. From Skopje, Gonxha imagined her own vision for India. On September 26, 1928, at the age of eighteen, Gonxha left her home to join the Loreto Sisters in Dublin, Ireland, who were "strongly influenced by the Jesuits."<sup>593</sup> It was the last time Gonxha would see her mother. As Mother Teresa said, "I've never doubted even for a second that I've done the right things: it was the will of God. It was his choice."<sup>594</sup> This statement shows that her family's faith had been shaping Mother Teresa's self-reflection on the works of missionaries about how to be a presence for others beyond the boundaries of family, nation, and religion. She devoted her decision as God's choice for her lifelong journey.

Gonxha spent six weeks at the Loreto convent in Dublin, taking "a crash course in a language she'd never heard before."<sup>595</sup> On December 1, 1928, Gonxha sailed from Dublin to India, and after seven weeks, arrived at the port of Calcutta in West Bengal in mid-January

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592. Kerry Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta: Missionary, Mother, Mystic* (Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2016), 3.

593. Leo Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta: A Personal Portrait* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 72.

594. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 6-7.

595. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 10.

1929. The primary mission of the Loreto Sisters was educational ministry: “a college and six high schools in Calcutta.”<sup>596</sup> As a novice in the Loreto Sisters, Gonxha was trained in “the spirituality of the order as well as in pedagogical technique.”<sup>597</sup> Meanwhile, Gonxha learned English and Bengali, one of the native Indian languages. At the end of March 1931, age twenty, Gonxha took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as a novice of the Loreto Sisters, taking the new name of Teresa. Gonxha chose the name Teresa because she was devoted to St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the “Little Flower,” as her spiritual patroness.

### ***Mother Teresa***

From 1929 to 1948, Mother Teresa was “[a] geography teacher and for some years [a] principal of the St. Mary’s High School in Calcutta.”<sup>598</sup> During her educational ministries, Mother Teresa, along with the girls of the school, visited the slums as well as the poor in the hospital. By visiting the poor beyond the walls of the Loreto convent, Mother Teresa found the worst poverty in the Dalit caste, the “untouchable” people of Calcutta. In her journal, Teresa wrote,

*Every Sunday I visit the poor in Calcutta’s slums. I cannot help them, because I do not have anything, but I go to give them joy. Last time about twenty little ones were eagerly expecting their “Ma.” When they saw me, they ran to me, even skipping on one foot. I entered. In that “para”—that is how a group of houses is called here—twelve families were living. Every family has only one room, two meters long and a meter and a half wide. The door is so narrow that I hardly could enter, and the ceiling is so low that I could not stand upright ... The poor mother [of the family she visited] did not utter even a word of complaint about her poverty. It was very painful for me, but at the same time I was very happy when I saw that they are happy because I visit*

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596. Edward Le Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta: A Biography* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 9.

597. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 14.

598. Mother Teresa, *A Simple Path*, ed. Lucinda Vardey (New York: Ballantine Books, 1995), 191.

them. Finally, the mother said to me: “Oh, Ma, come again! Your smile brought sun into this house!”<sup>599</sup>

The quotation shows that Mother Teresa attentively saw to the poorest of the poor. She discerned that poverty was not limited only to food or education, but also to the hunger for love. Mother Teresa reflected on the lowest level of poverty. This impacted her spiritual journey as a novitiate of the Loreto Sisters, and on May 24, 1937, Mother Teresa took her final vows as a Loreto Sister. The effect of poverty showed in her contemplation of the poor, which continued for the rest of her life. The world contexts, such as World War II and the political situation of India becoming an independent country, evoked Mother Teresa’s vision as a Loreto Sister. Mother Teresa’s deep insight produced a contemplative statement that “the poor are wonderful people.”<sup>600</sup> As Mother Teresa admitted, while being attentively present in the slum, she had a paradoxical inner experience: painful and happy feelings at the same time. Both the outer reality and the inner experience enlightened Mother Teresa about life beyond the walls of the Loreto convent. These, the Loreto convent and the social reality of Calcutta, are the environments in which Mother Teresa’s vision was clarified more and more. David Steindl-Rast proposes that environment functioned as *guru*. He says,

The word *guru* means dispeller of darkness. Not in the sense that there is something good or light, and something that is bad or dark: two parts of reality. I understand dispelling of darkness in the symbolic sense of dispelling confusion. If it is the guru’s function to dispel confusion—beginning with the confusion that there are two parts to reality—the result will be order. Only let us keep in mind that it is the dynamic order of life and love, the mysterious order of the great dance.<sup>601</sup>

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599. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, ed. Brian Kolodiejchuck (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 27. Emphasis added.

600. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 32.

601. David Steindl-Rast, *A Listening Heart: The Contemplative Living* (New York: Crossroad, 1984), 19.

Both inside and outside of the Loreto convent, which showed the paradoxical reality of life in the one world of Calcutta, became the *guru* for Mother Teresa in discerning the true vocation of a Loreto Sister. What is the call of God in these experiences?

From the year of her final vows, 1937, until 1946, the year of “the call within a call,” Mother Teresa discerned her vision. In light of discernment, she had “the eyes of God” in a way of seeing the poor. In Christian spirituality, there is a necessity to integrate vision and discernment because vision itself is a quest, something which is ongoing. Subsequently, discernment can help to see the vision more clearly, since discernment is “paying close attention to what goes on both in the external world and in our inner world of feelings and desire, thoughts and bodily sensations, dream and fantasies, aspirations and fears,” as Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon Au said.<sup>602</sup> There is “a process of critical reflection” in the context of relationship with God.<sup>603</sup> Discernment is taking the inner life of an individual as an important source of God’s way. To determine God’s way, Elizabeth Liebert proposes the term God’s call instead of God’s will. Liebert explains,

The phrase “God’s will” can itself be subtly misleading, though it is deeply embedded in the Christian discernment tradition. It implies that God’s will is a *thing* rather than a *relationship*, something “out there” that a person must discover and then do. Because of the open-ended and dynamic nature of God’s relationship with us, I prefer to speak of God’s *call* rather than God’s will—for I believe that “call” is more reflective of the open, relational, and non-predetermined nature God’s relationship with us than the classical term “will” often connotes.<sup>604</sup>

Liebert’s perspective is that God’s call is more about a relationship between God and human.

The term God’s call, instead of God’s will, demonstrates a negotiation process between God

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602. Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon Au, *The Discerning Heart: Exploring the Christian Path* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 5.

603. David Lonsdale, “Discernment” in *The New Westminster Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*, ed. Philip Sheldrake (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), 247.

604. Elizabeth Liebert, *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 31. Emphasis added.

and a person. God is not out there, out in the cosmos, but rather God's presence is in the poorest of the poor on earth. For Mother Teresa, the way of maintaining presence with the poor is the way of building relationship with God. Calling is about a relationship, rather than a command.

Mother Teresa had been working on her discernment for years. In her diary, part of her discernment was the letters from her mother. Mother Teresa wrote, "Mama is writing very regularly—truly she is giving me the strength to suffer joyfully. My departure was indeed the beginning of her supernatural life."<sup>605</sup> Even though Mother Teresa never again met in person with her mother after she left Albania in 1928, her mother's support enlightened her vocation. Discernment cannot be separated from the process of interplay between desolation and consolation. Liebert points out how religious affection is an important part in the process of discernment, in which the affection is:

[A] complex interrelationship of thought, feeling and willing that allows us to respond in one way rather than another ... Follow the faith, hope, and love as you sort through the feelings ... We return to these authentic signs of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives when we consider the final step in our discernment process, confirmation. We shall see that consolation will play a key role in our decision to finalize our tentative decision.<sup>606</sup>

Discernment is listening to the internal tone of voice through an intersection of head and heart in the realm of bad and good, suffering and joy, etc. In discerning her vision to be "the call within the call," Mother Teresa wrote in her journal:

I tried to persuade Our Lord that I would try to become a very fervent holy Loreto nun, a real victim here in this vocation—but the answer came very clear again. "*I want Indian Missionary Sisters of Charity—who would be My fire of love amongst the very poor—the sick—the dying—the little street children.— The poor I want you to bring to Me—and the Sisters that would offer their lives as victims of My love—would bring these souls to Me. You are I know the most incapable person, weak & sinful, but just because you*

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605. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 21.

606. Liebert, *Way of Discernment*, 129-30.



*are that I want to use you, for My glory! Wilt thou refuse?" These words or rather this voice frightened me. The thought of eating, sleeping—living like the Indians filled me with fear. I prayed long—I prayed so much ... Then once more the voice was very clear—"You have been always saying 'do with me whatever You wish.'—Now I want to act—let Me do it—My little spouse—My own little one.—Do not fear—I shall be with you always.—You will suffer and you suffer now—but if you are My own little spouse—the spouse of the Crucified Jesus—you will have to bear these torments on your heart.—Let Me act.—Refuse Me not.—Trust Me lovingly—trust Me blindly ... "*<sup>607</sup>

Her discernment, as a way of listening to the internal tone of voice, drew Mother Teresa to develop her relationship with God beyond concept and images. In the alignment of mind and heart, Mother Teresa learned to trust God in the darkness, even amidst suffering.

As well as her personal discernment, Mother Teresa, as a Loreto nun, was under the Papal Catholic constitution, and so was required to make a communal discernment. The communal discernment took two years, from 1946 to 1948, and began after "the call within a call" took place on the Day of Inspirational, September 10, 1946. Many times, Mother Teresa shared her vision and calling with her general superior, Fr. Celeste Van Exem, and the Archbishop of Calcutta, Ferdinand Périer, both Belgian Jesuits. Mother Teresa's request for permission to serve in to the slums of Calcutta was not an easy process, because it fell out of the Loreto Sisters constitution. There was a possibility that the requested service would be a secular service, outside of the Church, but Mother Teresa wanted the service to be part of the Church's service. Mother Teresa's request for exclaustation was "duly dispatched to Rome, in February 1948."<sup>608</sup> Finally, Mother Teresa's request was approved by the "Rome exclaustation or permission for a religious [person], bound by perpetual vows, to live for a time outside a convent and to be no longer under religious superiors, but directly under the

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607. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 49.

608. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 13.

authority of the bishop.”<sup>609</sup> On August 17, 1948,<sup>610</sup> “within a week of her thirty-eighth birthday,”<sup>611</sup> Mother Teresa, in response to God’s vision and call, walked out of the Loreto convent in a white sari with blue borders. She began to discern intensively her calling to serve the poorest of the poor in the slums.

The overview of Mother Teresa’s context above shows that her life experience rests on a particular time and place in social, political, and ecclesiastical contexts, such as her family background in Skopje, her life as a Loreto nun in the midst of tremendous poverty in Calcutta, and her struggle with the Papal Catholic constitution. These experiences shaped Mother Teresa in finding her true self in the way of being with others and with God. The particular time and place affected Mother Teresa in discovering her self-transcendence. In light of spirituality, Mother Teresa’s experience, as Perrin stated, is “experience as experience.”<sup>612</sup> Experience is not merely event(s) but experience as experience is about being open to new possibilities that might never have been thought before. Through critical reflection and imagination, the person being attentive to his or her experience as experience will increase his or her self-knowledge. For Mother Teresa, the context of the poorest of the poor constructed her vision to love others in a new way beyond material poverty and the Loreto Sisters’ constitution. This vision was called by Mother Teresa “the call within the call,” which led to the rise of a new order in the mid-twentieth century in Calcutta: the Missionaries of Charity. The particular time and place frame the experience, as the first of the

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609. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 13.

610. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 121.

611. David Scott, *The Love That Made Mother Teresa* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 2016), 59.

612. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 47.

four levels of intentional consciousness, before Mother Teresa moves on to understanding, judging, and deciding.

### The Influence of Carmelite Spirituality

#### ***St. Thérèse of Lisieux: Mother Teresa's spiritual patroness***

As I mentioned above, St. Thérèse of Lisieux was Mother Teresa's spiritual patroness. Who is St. Thérèse of Lisieux? St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-1897) was a Carmelite in her hometown of Lisieux, France. She was also known as St. Thérèse of the "Child Jesus," the "Little Flower" or "Little Teresa." This distinguishes her from St. Teresa of Avila, the "Big Teresa." St. Thérèse of Lisieux died at the age of 24, after struggling with tuberculosis for many years. She was canonized by Pope Pius XI in 1925, and in October 1997, Pope John Paul II declared St. Thérèse of Lisieux to be a Doctor of the Church. During her spiritual journey, Mother Teresa walked along "The Little Way" of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The spirituality of the "Little Way" involves a number of steps, which are: joy, love, the "Little Way," and quenching the thirst of Jesus.

#### Joy

Vilma Seelaus, a Carmelite Sister, highlights that the spiritual basis of St. Thérèse of Lisieux's is based on

her love of truth which enables her to penetrate the reality of the human condition as fragile and finite, yet passionately loved by God. She can now surrender to the wedding of seeming opposite: *spirituality* and *imperfection* as integral to her life with God ... where all roads for her appear equally dark—she also comes to a remarkable shift in vision.<sup>613</sup>

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613. Vilma Seelaus, "Thérèse: Spirituality of Imperfection," *Spiritual Life* 44 (1998): 205-6.

The darkness of St. Thérèse of Lisieux cannot be separated from her struggle with her inner suffering, dealing with the loss of her mother when she was a child. This traumatic loss influenced her life journey. St. Thérèse of Lisieux transformed her wounds into joy by surrendering “her ‘true self’ in the darkness which is the *divine* embrace.”<sup>614</sup> For St. Thérèse of Lisieux, God’s love was never absent from her, and that became the reason she lived the remainder of her life in joy, even in the midst of her suffering.

Mother Teresa stressed joy as a way of life for the Missionaries of Charity in the midst of tremendous poverty in Calcutta and beyond. She affirmed many times that

The best way to show our gratitude to God and to each other is to accept everything with joy. *A joyful heart* is the inevitable result of a heart burning with love.

We all long for heaven where God is, but we have it in our power to be in heaven with Him right now—to be happy with Him at this moment. But being happy with Him now means:

loving as He loves,  
helping as He helps,  
giving as He gives,  
serving as He serves,  
rescuing as He rescues,  
being with Him for all the twenty-four hours, and  
touching Him in His distressing disguise of the poor.<sup>615</sup>

For Mother Teresa, God’s presence is found in life experience and it is heaven. Heaven does not refer to a specific place out of the cosmos, but here in the world. Heaven dwells in the world, and that becomes the reason to celebrate God’s presence by following God’s actions: loving, helping, giving, serving, and rescuing others. These actions profess happiness of being with God by caring for the poor. Mother Teresa reminded the Sisters:

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614. Joann Wolski Conn, “Thérèse of Lisieux: Far From Spiritual Childhood,” *Spiritus* 6 (2006): 78.

615. Susan Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons of Love & Secrets of Sanctity* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003), 20. Emphasis added.

Keep giving Jesus to your people, not by words, but by your example, by your being in love with Jesus, by radiating his holiness, and by spreading his fragrance of love, wherever you go. Just *keep the joy of Jesus* as your strength. Be happy and at peace. Accept whatever he gives you, and give him whatever he takes from you. True holiness consists in doing God's will with a big smile.<sup>616</sup>

To the Sisters, Mother Teresa affirmed that the joy of Jesus is the source of strength for the Sisters in their services. The joy of Jesus was not an exclusive holy feeling, but rather an inclusive holy practice in daily life, including a simple practice: a smile.

## Love

Wilfrid McGreal, a Carmelite friar, affirms that “Thérèse always had a lively imagination and a sense of fun.”<sup>617</sup> Jesus was the source of love and happiness in her whole life, even in the midst of weaknesses. In her autobiography, St. Thérèse of Lisieux wrote, “... in the excess of my delirious joy, I cried out: O Jesus, my Love ... my *vocation*, at last I have found it MY VOCATION IS LOVE!”<sup>618</sup> In light of reformation, St. Thérèse of Lisieux was a reformer as McGreal highlights that, “by her life Thérèse became an icon of that love and shows us a face of the Church that is more than the institution ... If we want a renewed and missionary Church we need to move away from mere organizational and structural change and live love.”<sup>619</sup> St. Thérèse of Lisieux promoted God's love through a new manifestation of the Church, moving from an institution to a compassionate community. Through her

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616. Eileen Egan and Kathleen Egan, *Suffering into Joy: What Mother Teresa Teaches about True Joy* (Aan Arbor, MI: Servant Publications), 1994, 91-2. Emphasis added.

617. Wilfrid McGreal, *At the Fountain of Elijah: The Carmelite Tradition* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999), 88.

618. St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul: The Autobiography*, trans. John Clarke (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1996), 194.

619. McGreal, *At the Fountain of Elijah*, 93-4.

statement, *my vocation is love*, St. Thérèse of Lisieux emphasized an equal and open relationship with others, exemplified by her service to orphans, women with emotional problems, novices, and spiritual direction through correspondence. While she lived in a Carmelite monastery, St. Thérèse of Lisieux transcended her physical boundaries and the limitations of her health by concerning herself with loving others.

Mother Teresa highlighted love as a rhythm of daily life and love became one of the essential aspects of her charity. Mother Teresa said,

*Do not imagine that love to be true must be extraordinary. No, what we need in our love is the continuity to love the one we love. See how a lamp burns, by the continual consumption of the little drops of oil. If there are no more of these drops in the lamp, there will be no light ... What are these drops of oil in our lamps? They are the little things of everyday life: fidelity, punctuality, little words of kindness, just a little thought for others; those little acts of silence, of look, and of thought, of word, and of deed. These are the very drops of love that makes our life burn with so much light.*<sup>620</sup>

Mother Teresa interpreted love as ordinary, common, and everywhere, so that each person can have it. Love is being present for others; even in simple things, love is what makes a worthy life.

#### The “Little Way”

Mother Teresa described her impression of St. Thérèse of Lisieux and her “Little Way,” as she wrote, “We all want to love God, but how? The “Little Flower” is a most wonderful example. She did small things with great love. Ordinary things with extraordinary love. That is why she became a great saint.”<sup>621</sup> The “Little Way” of St. Thérèse of Lisieux

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620. Conroy, *Praying with Mother Teresa: Prayers, Insights, and Wisdom of Saint Teresa of Calcutta* (Stockbridge, MA: Marian Helpers Center, 2016), 35-6. Emphasis added.

621. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 216-7.

represented human limitations. Because of God's mercy, there was no obstacle to be intimate with God. She gave an example of a child's failure. St. Thérèse of Lisieux wrote,

Really, I am far from being a saint ... I should be desolate for having slept (for seven years) during my hours of prayers and my *thanksgivings* after Holy Communion; well, I am not desolate. I remember that little children are pleasing to their parents when they are asleep as well as when they are wide awake.<sup>622</sup>

The quotation shows how St. Thérèse of Lisieux understood spirituality in the simple way of human limitation. Through the "Little Way," St. Thérèse of Lisieux confessed her true self, including her experiences in the spiritual darkness caused by her health. Beyond that, St. Thérèse of Lisieux devoted the "Little Way" as her way to love God and others. The "Little Way" is a spirituality of simplicity, and it is the fruit of her personal maturity. Simplicity is a way of love for Mother Teresa, as she pointed out,

God's love is infinite—full of tenderness, full of *compassion*. The way we touch people, the way we give to people, that love we have for one another—it is His love in action through us. *Do small things with great love*. It is not how much we do—but how much we put in the doing, and it is not how much we give—but how much love we put in the giving. To God nothing is small; the moment we have given it to God, it becomes infinite.<sup>623</sup>

For Mother Teresa, the way of love is not measured by the size of actions, but is measured by the size of love itself. Mother Teresa called herself "God's pencil, I am his instrument."<sup>624</sup> She claimed, "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But if that drop was not in the ocean, I think the ocean will be less because of that missing drop."<sup>625</sup> The self-identification as God's pencil or a drop of water in the ocean described human participation, even in a small thing, by putting love in it.

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622. St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*, 165.

623. Conroy, *Mother Teresa's Lessons*, 85-6. Emphasis added.

624. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 168.

625. Mother Teresa, *Where There is Love*, 213.

To quench the thirst of Jesus

St. Thérèse of Lisieux struggled with her wounds and contemplated those into the thirst of Jesus on the cross as she wrote in the *Story of a Soul*:

On Sunday, looking at a picture of Our Lord on the Cross, I was struck by the blood flowing from one of the divine hands. I felt a great pang of sorrow when thinking this blood was falling to the ground without anyone's hastening to gather it up. I was resolved to remain in spirit at the foot of the Cross and to receive the divine dew. I understood I was then to pour it out upon souls. The cry of Jesus on the Cross sounded continually in my heart: "*I thirst!*" These words ignited within me an unknown and very living fire. I wanted to give my Beloved to drink and I felt myself consumed with a *thirst for souls*. As yet, it was not the souls of priests that attracted me, but those of *great sinners*; I burned with the desire to snatch from the eternal flames.<sup>626</sup>

Contemplating the picture of the crucified Jesus inspired St. Thérèse of Lisieux to loving actions for others. The thirst of Jesus imitated the thirst of the sinners who need to be satisfied. The cry of Jesus is the cry of the people who ask for help. Another biblical story upon which St. Thérèse of Lisieux reflected frequently was in the Gospel of St. Luke, when Jesus sat beside a well and asked the Samaritan woman, "Give me water to drink." Jacques Gauthier proposes that "St. Thérèse moved ever deeper towards this central motif of the Little Way: Jesus' thirst for our love, which can be quenched by those of us who are poor in spirit."<sup>627</sup> Indeed, St. Thérèse of Lisieux put her physical limitations into the mystical longing of her soul for Jesus' love.

"I thirst," were the words of a mystical voice that Mother Teresa heard in the midst of a crowd of the poorest of the poor, on her way to Darjeeling for her annual retreat. To satiate the thirst of Jesus, Mother Teresa also reflected on the parable of the Last Judgment in the

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626. St. Thérèse of Lisieux, *Story of a Soul*, 99.

627. Jacques Gauthier, *I Thirst: Thérèse of Lisieux and Mother Teresa*, trans. Alexandra Plettenberg-Serban (Staten Island, NY: St. Paul, 2005), 9-10.



Gospel of St. Matthew, in which Jesus identifies with the thirsty, hungry, naked, and so on. As with St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the crucified Jesus was the fundamental theology for Mother Teresa's spirituality and the Missionaries of Charity. The crucified Jesus was deeply tied to the life of the Sisters. One of Mother Teresa's letters to the Sisters:

My dearest Child,  
Keep looking at the Sacred Heart.—Why worry if it be TB [tuberculosis] or not?—You are His and it is His gift, His spouse. Was it not Mother who taught you to say for the profession I desire to become the Spouse of Jesus Crucified?—It is not Jesus glorified or in the crib, but on the Cross – alone – naked – bleeding—suffering—dying on the Cross ... So smile—smile at the Hand that strikes you—kiss the Hand that is nailing you to the Cross.<sup>628</sup>

Mother Teresa stressed that contemplation of the crucified Jesus points to an intimate relationship, like a spouse. The intimate relationship shows a transcendental way to God through service for the poor, the sick, and the dying, with all its consequences, such as being infected by a disease. When discussing John of the Cross, Denys Turner proposes that “the soul's union with God is set within that now so familiar *dialectic of transcendence* which demonstrates the failure of all our language of oneness and distinction. Within that dialectic a dichotomy between grace and freewill is as impossible to construct as any between union with God and distinction.”<sup>629</sup> Likewise, “I thirst” becomes the dialectic of transcendence between Jesus and Mother Teresa, which is expressed in the term *the Spouse of Jesus Crucified*.

In Mother Teresa's last letter to her Sisters, Brothers, and volunteers, she re-affirmed the spirit of St. Thérèse of Lisieux as her spiritual patroness, as shown in the last paragraph of that letter, dated the day she passed away, September 5, 1997:

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628. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 157.

629. Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 247. Emphasis added.

And now I have heard that Jesus is giving us one more gift. This year, one hundred years after she went home to Jesus. Holy Father is declaring the Little Flower (Saint Thérèse of Lisieux) to be a Doctor of the Church. Can you imagine—for doing little things with great love the Church is making her a Doctor, like Saint Augustine and the big Saint Teresa [St. Teresa of Avila]! It is just like Jesus said in the Gospel to the one who was seated in the lowest place: “Friend, come up higher.” So let us keep very small and follow the Little Flower’s way of trust and love and joy, and we will fulfill Mother’s promise to give saints to Mother Church.<sup>630</sup>

Her letter affirmed how Mother Teresa was, from the beginning until the end of her life, deeply rooted in the spiritual tradition of St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

Having set the stage, it is easy to see how Mother Teresa was influenced deeply by St. Thérèse of Lisieux as her spiritual patroness, as well as St. Thérèse of Lisieux’s spirituality of the “Little Way.” However, with regard to influential aspects, there are some differences in emphases as St. Thérèse of Lisieux and Mother Teresa lived in different contexts of time and place, as well as having different family backgrounds and theological perspectives. The greatest influences of St. Thérèse of Lisieux on Mother Teresa are: first, the core of their service for others is based on the humanity of Jesus on the cross, and Jesus’ plea—“I thirst!”—becomes the theological basis of their calling or vocation. Second, their services are an integration of contemplation and action. Third, they practice simplicity of life in which their love for others went beyond their limitations and led them to serve with joy.

However, by establishing the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa reformed traditional spirituality into modern spirituality. There are three fundamental reformations:

*First*, the Carmelite order is a product of medieval spirituality which places more emphasis on the soul, rather than the body. This is in opposition to the emphasis of the Missionaries of Charity, which focuses on the body. Emphasis on the body is in line with modern spirituality that takes into account the human as a holistic being. For the Missionaries

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630. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 228.

of Charity, the basic needs of the poor must be fulfilled first. Moreover, for the Missionaries of Charity, the body of the poor *is* the body of Christ.

*Second*, the Carmelite order is concerned with serving the poor, but they live in isolation in a convent as a “holy place,” due to their spiritual emphasis on interior silence and solitude. This means Carmelites live separately from the poor. The Missionaries of Charity do not live in a convent, but in, as Mother Teresa called it, a “house.” This house is also the place of service for the poor. Mother Teresa affirmed, “*My true community is the poor.*”<sup>631</sup> At this point, for the Missionaries of Charity, the poor is not an object of service, but a part of the community of the Sisters. This leads the Missionaries of Charity to live in radical poverty.

*Third*, for centuries, charity was one of the cardinal virtues of the Church, which led to the virtue of charity being synonymous with the Church. Mother Teresa developed the idea that charity does not belong only to the Church, but is a universal virtue for people who are concerned about humanity. As a universal virtue, charity can be practiced by people across boundaries: age, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. The Missionaries of Charity invite people to be volunteers for a period of the time, to help them in serving the poor. Mother Teresa promoted a spiritual maturity which went beyond religion. Later, I will explore these three reformations in more detail in discussing on the mystical way of Mother Teresa.

#### Desire of Human Spirit: “I thirst.”

The exclamation from God that Mother Teresa heard was “I thirst!” The Day of Inspiration, September 10, 1946, was the greatest “mystical moment” of her life, and she

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631. Egan and Egan, *Suffering into Joy*, 89. Emphasis added.

called it “the call within a call.”<sup>632</sup> Steindl-Rast stresses that a peak experience is the mystical moment that opens up mysticism for an individual. This leads to an understanding that “a mystic is not a special kind of human being. Rather, every human being is a special kind of mystic. We better believe this and live up to our vocation.”<sup>633</sup> A mystical moment becomes a stepping stone for a new value of life and the next vocation within the life journey. Mystical moments happen in ordinary life, such as Mother Teresa’s experience on her trip to Darjeeling. The moment was a transcendental consciousness. Mother Teresa said,

[It] was a call within my vocation. It was *a second calling*. It was a vocation to give up even Loreto *where I was very happy and to go out in the streets to serve the poorest of the poor*. It was in that train, I heard the call to give up all and follow Him into the slums—to serve Him in the poorest of the poor ... I knew it was His will and that I had to follow Him. There was no doubt that it was going to be His work.<sup>634</sup>

Mother Teresa mentioned that it was her second calling, which came to her seventeen years after she arrived in Calcutta.<sup>635</sup> Basically, the second calling was a crystallization of her contemplative life.

Mother Teresa’s spirituality, “I thirst,” has a reciprocal meaning of suffering on Jesus’ side as an invitation, and on humanity’s side as a response in action. The human response becomes “the chalice” that is offered to satiate the thirst of Jesus on the cross.<sup>636</sup> The letters “I thirst” written on black paper is nailed to the wall on the right side of the Crucifix. “I thirst” becomes the core spirituality of the Missionaries of Charity, as Mother Teresa proposed:

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632. Steindl-Rast, *Listening Heart*, 35.

633. Steindl-Rast, *Listening Heart*, 35.

634. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 39-40. Emphasis added.

635. Mother Teresa arrived in Calcutta as a Loreto nun in mid-January 1929 and the second calling came to her on September 10, 1946 as she called *the Day of Inspiration*.

636. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 107.

*“I thirst,”* Jesus said on the Cross when Jesus was deprived of every consolation, dying in absolute poverty, left alone, despised and broken in body and soul. He spoke of His thirst—not for water—but for love, for sacrifice.

Jesus is God: therefore, His love, His thirst is infinite. Our aim is to quench this infinite thirst of a God made man. Just like the adoring angels in Heaven ceaselessly sing the praise of God, so the Sisters, using the four vows of Absolute Poverty, Chastity, Obedience, and Charity towards the poor ceaselessly quench the thirsting God by their love and of the love of the soul they bring to Him.<sup>637</sup>

In Mother Teresa’s spirituality, the yearning of Christ on the Cross, “I thirst,” is “a new tabernacle” that should be the axis of the whole life.<sup>638</sup> “I thirst” is the intersection between Jesus’ heart and the heart of the Missionaries of Charity, as Mother Teresa affirmed,

Jesus wants me to tell you again ... how much is the love He has for each one of you—beyond all what you can imagine ... Not only He loves you, even more—He longs for you. He misses you when you don’t come close. He thirsts for you. He loves you always, even when you don’t feel worthy ...

For me it is so clear—everything in MC [the Missionaries of Charity] exists *only to satiate Jesus*. His words on the wall of every MC chapel, they are not from [the] past only, but alive here and now, spoke to you. Do you believe it? ... Why does Jesus say “I thirst”? What does it mean? Something so hard to explain in words— ... “I thirst” is something much deeper than just Jesus saying “I love you.” Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you—you can’t begin to know who He wants to be for you. Or who He wants you to be for Him.<sup>639</sup>

“I thirst” is a contemplative listening by Mother Teresa to the whole existence of the Dalit, who are hungry for the basic human needs: food, clothes, housing, and the thirst of love. The spirituality of “I thirst” is a desire to love and to accompany those who are unloved and unwanted. “I thirst” is a doorway of compassion for the poorest of the poor, trapped in their social structure.

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637. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 41. Emphasis added.

638. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 81.

639. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 42. Emphasis added.

As I described in Chapter 3, Lonergan's notion of desire relates to self-consciousness as a knower and a doer. Desire points to the desiring subject as the subjective presence leads to the insight of mystery. Snedden highlights that desire is "the spirit of inquiry to be recognized in questions for understanding; it is a drive *to seek* an adequate understanding and then *to identify* what it is to act in accordance with the realm of fact."<sup>640</sup> For Mother Teresa, her unrestricted desire to know was an ongoing process of seeking and identifying the meaning of her presence in Calcutta. In other words, the process of seeking and identifying examined her desire to live authentically. While she served as a Loreto Sister, Mother Teresa was open to her inner-self and to God by being in communion with the people inside and outside the convent. To see and to meet with the poor in the tremendous poverty of Calcutta was not in itself a surprising moment. It was a daily experience, since Mother Teresa arrived in Calcutta seventeen years before the Day of Inspiration.

The unrestricted desire for authenticity drew Mother Teresa to be the subjective presence with "liberating imperatives, [to] be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, [these are] to be lured to acknowledge *all that is true*, to love *all that is of value*."<sup>641</sup> Her desire for truth and value led Mother Teresa to face challenging obstacles, including the Papal Catholic constitutions that took two years of personal and communal discernment to overcome. As Lonergan explains, when one is being in love as self-transcendence, the act of being in love involves "one's desire and fears, one's joys and sorrows, one's discernment of values, one's decisions and deeds."<sup>642</sup> This complex journey drew Mother Teresa to surrender to the Absolute, even "to the mystery of God" because it

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640. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 35. Emphasis added.

641. Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 58. Emphasis added.

642. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

was not yet clear what was in front of her as she heard: “I thirst.”<sup>643</sup> Mother Teresa claimed it was the voice of God who asked for her help. “I thirst,” as the second calling of Mother Teresa, was a “gift” through openness, as Snedden quotes Lonergan on the correlation between openness and religious experience:

Openness as fact is the pure desire to know ... [Openness as] achievement itself arises when the actual orientation of consciousness coincides with the exigencies of the pure, detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know ... But there is also *openness as gift*, as an effect of divine grace. Man [or woman]’s natural openness is complete. The pure desire is unrestricted.<sup>644</sup>

Two characteristics of the gift being spoken of are individuality and unpredictability. In the context of Mother Teresa, the individuality of the gift occurred when the voice spoke to her and not to another Loreto Sister, who had accompanied her on the trip to Darjeeling. Also, the gift was unpredictable because Mother Teresa did not know before her trip that the Day of Inspiration would call her to have more total love for the poorest of the poor. The openness of Mother Teresa reveals the value of love, because her open mind and open heart were caused by her love. Openness affirms that love is not blind, but that love is seeing and attending.

The “I thirst” as the contemplative listening of Mother Teresa to the crucified Jesus appealed to her to make a decision in response to God by being in love through the subjective presence. In light of Lonergan’s thought, Mother Teresa’s desire became the “massive thrust to self-transcendence.”<sup>645</sup> This thrust refers to the self-transcending choice to fulfil her desire of truth and love. Through the fulfilment of her desire, “I thirst,” Mother Teresa reached her authenticity by *being in love with God* as the way of life. In the desire of “I thirst,” there is an intersection between the flowing of God’s love through the Holy Spirit and the human

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643. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 40.

644. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 57. Emphasis added.

645. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 61.

spirit.<sup>646</sup> The “I thirst,” is an appropriative desire of Mother Teresa for others and God, and operates on the three conversions as the dynamic of self-transcendence, to be discussed later in the chapter.

### Her Mystical Way: Charity is Love

The desire of “I thirst” became her mystical way, which led to a transformative service: charity. Mother Teresa stated the charity that she and the Sisters reformed was not simply a social action, but it was love. Her mystical way was radical oneness, radical openness, pure joy, radical poverty, and radical compassion. The works of her mystical way intertwined with each other, occurring simultaneously instead of as a step-by-step process.

#### ***Radical Oneness: Christocentric Nothingness***

Being simultaneously one with the crucified Jesus and the poor is a mystical oneness. It emerges from an integrative contemplation between reality and Christian belief. Beverly Lanzetta explains that “the mystical glance of oneness is not abstract. It translates into a oneness of spirit that spills over into the affairs of the world and calls us to forge a state of consciousness that sees reality from God’s perspective.”<sup>647</sup> Moreover, Lanzetta explains that “oneness is a state of consciousness in which we are capable of being in solidarity with and experiencing the *pathos* of each other’s condition.”<sup>648</sup> Oneness itself is a sacred existence and

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646. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

647. Beverly J. Lanzetta, *The Other Side of Nothingness: Toward a Theology of Radical Openness* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2001), 98.

648. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 98. Emphasis added.



becomes “the source of compassion, generosity, and hope.”<sup>649</sup> Mother Teresa affirmed that to serve the poor is to be poor with them. She said, “How can you truly know the poor unless you live like them? If they complain about the food, we can say that we eat the same. The more we have the less we can give. Poverty is a wonderful gift because it gives us freedom—it means we have fewer obstacles to God.”<sup>650</sup> Further, “capacity to experience compassion for others and to identify with others’ wounds translates into a desire to alleviate the suffering that religious divisiveness has caused in our world.”<sup>651</sup> “I thirst” shows a radical spirituality in which the radical oneness transforms, through action, the radical compassion.

For Mother Teresa, the type of services she and the Sisters performed was distinct: “We are not social workers. We are really contemplatives in the heart of the world ... We have twenty-four hours in His presence, you, and I ... We are twenty-four hours with Jesus in the hungry, in the naked, in the homeless, in the lonely.”<sup>652</sup> Mother Teresa’s statement highlights the meaning of *pathos* in their service. The Greek term *pathos*, or *passio* in Latin means “passion” in English and has a deep meaning, as Samuel Solivan quotes from Abraham J. Heschel’s *The Prophets*:

*Pathos* denotes, not an idea of goodness, but a living care, not an immutable example, but an outgoing challenge, a dynamic relation between God and man [woman] not mere feeling or passive affection, but an act or attitude composed of various elements; not mere contemplative survey of the world, but a passionate summons.<sup>653</sup>

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649. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 98.

650. Mother Teresa, *Simple Path*, xxxxi.

651. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 99.

652. Mother Teresa, *Where There is Love*, 213-4.

653. Samuel Solivan, *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 48.

Thus, *pathos* is not about a feeling while doing nothing, but rather a contemplative activeness, which Mother Teresa and the Sisters called being “contemplative in the heart of the world.” It is a passionate being as a doer. In line with Lanzetta, Solivan affirms that in regard to *pathos*, “*orthopathos* can be that bridge between piety and social engagement, between proper thinking and proper doing ... *Orthopathos* must be understood in its relation to God and to neighbor ... Who we are and how we interact with our world is tied to who God is for us.”<sup>654</sup> There should be no separation between piety and social engagement; like “the cross that stood between the incarnation and the resurrection, the possibilities of *orthopathos* stand between orthodoxy and orthopraxis, seeking to be a resource to incarnate orthodoxy and to resurrect and relocate orthopraxis.”<sup>655</sup> *Orthopathos* creates the link between love of God and love of others as oneness. How Mother Teresa confessed who Jesus is for her is an expression of this oneness:

Jesus is my God,  
 Jesus is my Spouse,  
 Jesus is my Life,  
 Jesus is my only Love,  
 Jesus is my All in All,  
 Jesus is my Everything.<sup>656</sup>

*Orthopathos* is embedded in Mother Teresa and the Sisters, in which pity and social service are integrated. They are the *interlocutor* between God and humanity.

The oneness between a person and God creates a concrete sacrifice through voluntary self-suffering. Lanzetta highlights, “Without voluntary *self-sacrifice* we cannot understand divine suffering or how suffering fully experienced becomes joy. Our capacity for suffering is the means by which we transform the world. It teaches us that we must refuse to dogmatize

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654. Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 37-8. Emphasis added.

655. Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 38.

656. Mother Teresa, *Simple Path*, 43.

the profound, or to segregate the holy.”<sup>657</sup> The voluntary self-sacrifice of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity became the magnet which drew in many people, across boundaries such as ethnicity, language, and religion, to come to Calcutta just to volunteer for period of time. Mother Teresa said:

The volunteers who come to Calcutta help mostly with the sick and the dying, or they help with our children at Shishu Bhavan. They are beautiful people who give so generously. Many make great sacrifices to come here, to share in the work of loving the poor, feeling the closeness of Jesus. Being here, for some, gives them the chance to really deepen their personal love for Him.<sup>658</sup>

This shows that the spirituality of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity becomes a *school of love* which teaches people how to quench the thirst of humanity.

The “I thirst” spirituality of Mother Teresa includes aspects of the darkness of God or the unseen God. When Mother Teresa’s book, *Come Be My Light*, was published in 2007, ten years after she died, the public was shocked by her secret spiritual life. The topic was featured on the front page of *Time Magazine*’s September 3, 2007 issue.<sup>659</sup> From her private writing, Mother Teresa unveiled her agony:

The darkness is so dark—and I am alone.—Unwanted, forsaken.—The Loneliness of the heart that wants love is unbearable.—Where is my faith?—Even deep down, right in there is nothing but emptiness & darkness.—My God—how painful is this unknown pain. It pains without ceasing.—I have no faith.<sup>660</sup>

[ ... ]

Darkness is such that I really do not see—neither with my mind nor with my reason.—The place of God in my soul is blank.—There is no God in me.—When the pain of longing is so great—I just long & long for God—and then it is that I feel—He does not want me—He is not there.—Heaven—souls—why these are just words—which means nothing to me ... Sometimes—I just hear my own heart cry out—“My God” and nothing else comes ... Father [Jesuit

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657. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 106. Emphasis added.

658. Mother Teresa, *Simple Path*, 143.

659. The headline is in the edition of September 3, 2007 vol. 170 no. 10.

660. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 187.

Father Joseph Neuner]<sup>661</sup> ... Teach me to love God—teach me to love Him much, I am not learned—I don't know many things about the things of God.<sup>662</sup>

Such agony seems to conflict with the passionate service that earned her many awards, including a Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. How should the darkness experienced be understood in light of spirituality?

Mother Teresa felt that the darkness started in 1949-1950, during the time of her struggle to establish the Missionaries of Charity. Mother Teresa was affected by the aftermath of World War II when she came to the slums in Calcutta, “the dark holes of the poor.”<sup>663</sup> Brian Kolodiejchuck, in Mother Teresa's book *Come Be My Light*, mentions,

Immediately after India's independence [1947], the influx of people into the capital of Bengal was enormous. The city that was known for its palaces saw its slum areas growing ... a bare minimum of food ... no medical help available. The number of street dwellers, who lacked even this bare minimum, was growing and they were at the mercy of illness, hunger, and starvation.<sup>664</sup>

Most of the people there were the Dalit, the untouchable caste in the Indian Hindu social structure. This is an important context in studying Mother Teresa because, as Donald Mitchell says, “no spiritual journey is without a cultural context since all experience of the divine is human and occurs at a particular time and place.”<sup>665</sup> Spirituality as a lived experience is grounded in history. The words nothingness, emptiness, and darkness are

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661. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 381. See endnote chapter 10, no. 1.

662. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 210-1.

663. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 131.

664. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 131.

665. Donald W. Mitchell, *Spirituality and Emptiness: The Dynamics of Spiritual Life in Buddhism and Christianity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), vii. See Schneider, “Approaches,” 21.

symbolic language that mystics, including Mother Teresa, have been using for centuries.<sup>666</sup> Mother Teresa's experience of the darkness of God is rooted in the intersection between "the dark holes of the poor" as the concrete context of human suffering and the passion of Christ: "I thirst." In light of the mystical tradition, Mother Teresa takes on a "voluntary suffering" which transforms into the capacity for self-transcendence.<sup>667</sup>

To understand the darkness of God, Lanzetta proposes using "the desert hermeneutic [which is] an investigation of *apophatic* mysticism. Thus *apophasis* refers to the inadequacy of language of capture 'That' which is forever hidden and obscured. God is most appropriately named by what is not, because no name can do justice to the ineffability of the divine."<sup>668</sup> Even though Mother Teresa and the Sisters faced the *Corpus Christi* and received the Eucharist in the daily early morning Mass, Lanzetta explains that symbolic language, such as emptiness, is "sacramental, nonviolent, inclusive, and intimate. [It is followed by] the trajectory of self-emptying divine ... and leads to the doorway of genuine intimacy."<sup>669</sup> The genuine intimacy takes a new form of spiritual practice and service for the poorest of the poor.

The experience of darkness in Mother Teresa's soul, and the feelings of emptiness that resulted, influenced her encounters with the unseen God: "my own soul remains in deep darkness & desolation. But I don't complain—let Him do with me whatever He wants."<sup>670</sup> Emptiness is not a static stage trapping Mother Teresa in a state of spiritual darkness, but

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666. I use "nothingness" and "emptiness" interchangeably.

667. Jakub Urbaniak, "Suffering in the Mystical Traditions of Buddhism and Christianity," *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70 (2014): 7, accessed June 17, 2016, doi: 10.4102/hts.v70i1.2117.

668. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 8-9.

669. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 82.

670. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 154.

rather it creates openness and genuine intimacy with Christ. In her letter to the Sisters, Mother Teresa says,

Dear Co-worker of Christ,  
You had said “Yes” to Jesus—and He has taken you at your word.—The Word of God became Man—Poor. Your word to God—became Jesus—poor and so this terrible emptiness you experience. God cannot fill what is full.—He can fill only emptiness—deep poverty—and your “Yes” is the beginning of being or becoming empty. It is not how much we really ‘have’ to give—but how empty we are—so that we can receive fully in our life and let Him live His life in us.<sup>671</sup>

Mother Teresa emphasized that “Christ brings to consciousness the coincidence of opposite mirrored in creation: emptiness in fullness, nothingness in somethingness.”<sup>672</sup> This is what Lanzetta means when she says “the Apophatic Christ [which] approaches reality from the side of emptiness and reads his message of salvation from the vantage point of the divine abyss.”<sup>673</sup> Lanzetta refers to Meister Eckhart who proposed a theological perspective on “the other side of Christian theism, [what Lanzetta calls] *christocentric nothingness* ... the soul’s capacity to mystically replicate Christ’s emptiness on the cross.”<sup>674</sup> The kenosis of God through Jesus Christ does not mean God is only *Immanuel*, “God among us,” but also can be *deus absconditus*, “the hidden God.” There is a mystical void, as Mitchell highlights that “our being opens to immanent-transcendent Being at our Center, so too this Being-as-fullness, present to us in an intimate, Trinitarian and personal way, seems to disappear into an emptiness, a void, an impersonal infinite mystery.”<sup>675</sup> Mother Teresa’s experience of darkness shows an integration between *Immanuel* and *deus absconditus*. In light of

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671. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 275.

672. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 90.

673. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 79-93.

674. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 57.

675. Mitchell, *Spirituality and Emptiness*, 23.

mysticism, William Johnston notes that for mystics, including Mother Teresa, “God is not a clear-cut object but a loving presence which they obscurely sense. They feel that they are in a *cloud of unknowing*, crying out to a God whom they love but cannot see.”<sup>676</sup> Mother Teresa cannot be judged as having lost her faith because she had an experience of agony. Agony has nothing to do with losing faith, or a sin. Mother Teresa’s spiritual patroness, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, suffered the childhood emotional trauma of her mother’s death and physical illness of tuberculosis, but St. Thérèse of Lisieux understood her experience of darkness in light of the *divine* embrace. Seelaus stresses that St. Thérèse of Lisieux embraced her experiences of fragility and finitude as she says, “I do not wish to be freed from sufferings here on earth, for suffering united with love is all that still seems to me desirable in this vale of tears.”<sup>677</sup> Seelaus argues that by embracing weakness St. Thérèse of Lisieux creates *spirituality of imperfection* in which “our specific woundedness is integral to the unique image of God that each of us is.” For a mystic, being faithful is not a religious status, but rather a *religious journey in knowing of the unknown*.<sup>678</sup> The mystic’s journey to God is a paradox. The more a mystic comes to understand, or the closer a mystic comes to God, the more the mystic realizes she does not know, and the further she realizes she is from God.

Thus, “I thirst” becomes the core of Mother Teresa’s spirituality in which the image of the crucified Jesus appears clearly and evokes conscious transformation in the midst of the darkness of God’s experience. This conscious transformation becomes a concrete action which is burned by the flame of love. Mother Teresa acknowledges that being poor is not only about material needs but also soul needs, such as love, care, compassion, and joy. This is

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676. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 67-8. Emphasis added.

677. Seelaus, “Thérèse,” 205.

678. Seelaus, “Thérèse,” 206.

the “virtue of Christ *kenosis*” which is expressed in paradoxical mystery.<sup>679</sup> Being soul-poor is the virtue of kenosis as the radical oneness.

### ***Radical Openness: The Work of Mercy***

Mother Teresa and the Sisters chose to be one with the poor who are “thirsty.” Now, “I thirst” is a spiritual longing of both God and humanity. The longing is fulfilled by caring for the poor. Mother Teresa and the Sisters needed to fulfill their spiritual thirst in daily Mass and devotion. Making space for solitude as a person and a community is a necessity. Mother Teresa said, “God has not called me to be successful; He has called me to be faithful.”<sup>680</sup> Jack Finnegan highlights, “Christian Spirituality is all about an utterly embodied soul-praxis: soul-awakening, soul-caring, soul-discovering, soul-exploring, soul-loving, soul-making and soul-nurturing, factors that make spirituality both *a discipline* and *an adventure*.”<sup>681</sup> Daily spiritual practices for Mother Teresa and the Sisters were not only a discipline but also an adventure, where they worked toward openness through solitary practice in their spiritual journey as a community. Steindl-Rast points out that “Community is always poised between two poles: solitude and togetherness. Without togetherness community disperses; without solitude community collapses into a mass, a crowd.”<sup>682</sup> Relevant to this point, personal solitude, communal devotion, and service to the poor are aspects of the spiritual journey, which are interconnected in the light of God’s mercy for Mother Teresa, the Sisters, and the poor.

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679. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 89.

680. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 89.

681. Jack Finnegan, *The Audacity of Spirit: The Meaning and Shaping of Spirituality Today* (Dublin, Ireland: Veritas, 2008), 224. Emphasis added.

682. Steindl-Rast, *Listening Heart*, 24.



Desmond Doig, a journalist who observed Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, notes that the Eucharist was a majestic and mysterious moment for Mother Teresa. Doig reminisces, “When she [Mother Teresa] knelt to receive the Sacrament, she might have been kneeling at the feet of the Lord, there was such ecstasy on her face.”<sup>683</sup> Mother Teresa affirmed,

I cannot do without Mass and Holy Communion. Without Jesus. If I can see Jesus in the appearance of bread then I will be able to see Him in the broken bodies of the poor. That is why I need that *oneness* with Christ. If I have that deep faith in the Eucharist, naturally I will be able to touch Him in the broken bodies because He has said, “I am the Living Bread.”<sup>684</sup>

For Mother Teresa, the Eucharist was not only a ritual but also a process of mystical openness, to be touched by the body of Christ which evoked her spirituality toward the body of the poorest of the poor, especially when she kissed the crucified Jesus before receiving the host.

Kissing the feet of the crucified Jesus and receiving the body of Christ becomes hypostasis that confirms a radical openness. Further, Lanzetta explains that radical openness is “a condition of being-in-the-world that is necessary in order to bear (in the world) the divinity of creation ... It is an opening to these wounds, and to a compassionate identification with the fragile, suffering, and oppressed bodies.”<sup>685</sup> For Mother Teresa, the hypostasis happened in the chapel and on the street or in the Nirmal Hriday or Home for the Dying, when she helped the poor.

To contemplate “I thirst” is to embrace suffering, and Mother Teresa highlighted that “suffering by itself has no meaning ... But suffering shared with the suffering of Christ has a

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683. Desmond Doig, *Mother Teresa: Her People and Her Work* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1980), 129. Emphasis added.

684. Doig, *Mother Teresa*, 129-30.

685. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 119-20.

tremendous meaning. The suffering offered as a reparation has a tremendous meaning ... *Suffering is really the most beautiful way of growing in holiness to be like Jesus.*”<sup>686</sup> For Mother Teresa, suffering creates a radical openness which calls individuals “to feel the beauty of life, to be pierced by the generosity of the world, and to be felled by life’s sensitivity and grace.”<sup>687</sup> That is not hyperbolic language, but rather the deepest spirituality of Mother Teresa when she looks beyond suffering and poverty. In one of her prayers, Mother Teresa says,

*Mary, Mother of Jesus, you were the first one to hear Jesus cry, “I thirst.” You know how real, how deep is His longing for me and for the poor. I am yours—Teach me, bring me face-to-face with the love in the Heart of Jesus Crucified.*  
*With your help, Mother Mary, I will listen to Jesus’s thirst and it will be for me a WORLD OF LIFE. Standing near you, I will give Him my love, and I will give Him the chance to love me and so be the cause of your joy. And so I will satiate the thirst of Jesus. Amen.*<sup>688</sup>

This prayer shows that Mother Teresa’s service to the poor is the spiritual longing of both God and herself, manifested through her obedience of listening to the thirst of Jesus. Her service transcends her faith and goes out into the world and enters the reality of life.

Calcutta is “the dark holes of the poor,” where Mother Teresa dedicated the majority of her life.<sup>689</sup> Struggling with her vocational journey, she wrote:

Today—my God—what tortures of loneliness.—I wonder how long will my heart suffer this.—Fr. Bauwens, S.J. the Parish Priest of St. Teresa’s came to bless the house.—Tears rolled & rolled.—Everyone sees my weakness. My God, give me courage now to fight self & the tempter. Let me not draw back from the sacrifice I have made of my free choice and conviction.—

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686. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 185. Emphasis added.

687. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 120.

688. Mother Teresa, *A Call to Mercy: Hearts to Love, Hands to Serve*, ed. Brian Kolodiejchuck (New York: Image, 2016), 33.

689. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 131.

Immaculate Heart of my Mother, have pity on thy poor child. For love of thee  
I want to live & die an M.C.<sup>690</sup>

According to Wayne Whitson Floyd, this shows that despite her struggles, she had “radical openness to the sufferings, the *páthos*, of others. To suffer *with* another, one must *suffer* with another. This means to ‘suffer’ the other, to listen, to bear the cry of the other, as God has done in Christ.”<sup>691</sup> Radical openness is a mystical journey; Lanzetta describes “[m]ystical openness as being not about finding solutions, or even about assuaging the pain associated with religious factionalism. It is not an absolute ever fully achieved ... [I]t is a spiritual training in the art of withstanding creative paradox to the point of nothingness where divine intimacy can be received.”<sup>692</sup> Openness is a foundation of mystical life.

Mother Teresa was not free from the criticism of others. For example, Christopher Hitchens criticized Mother Teresa, saying “she was not a friend of the poor. She was a friend of *poverty*.”<sup>693</sup> Hitchens’ criticism refers to the quality of care Mother Teresa gave to the poor. While she cared for their physical needs, she seemed silent on issues of social justice and social change. Therefore, critics accused Mother Teresa of not being humanistic in her work. Kerry Walters, a scholar in theology and philosophy, argues, “Missionaries of Charity pursue the works of mercy. Instead of trying to change social structures, they sought to feed, clothe, and love individuals, and that entailed living with those whom they served instead of meeting in boardrooms to study statistics and plan strategy.”<sup>694</sup> The work of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity should be understood as a new form of the “Little Way,” the

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690. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 134.

691. Wayne Whitson Floyd Jr., “Compassion in Theology,” in *Compassionate Ministry*, ed. Gary L. Sapp (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1993), 46.

692. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 114.

693. Donohue, *Unmasking Mother Teresa’s Critics*, 52.

694. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 77.

guiding principle for the Missionaries of Charity's simplicity of life, which is rooted in the spirituality of St. Thérèse of Lisieux.

Mother Teresa had good reason for choosing to serve people directly rather than trying to change the system that created these needs. She said, "In the world today there are those whose struggle is for justice and human right. We have no time for this because we are in daily and continuous contact with people who are starving for a piece of bread and for some affection. I want to state clearly that I do not condemn those who struggle for justice. I believe there are different options for the people of God."<sup>695</sup> The *work of mercy* was described on *Mother Teresa's business card*, as she called it. It read:

*The fruit of silence is prayer*  
*The fruit of prayer is faith*  
*The fruit of faith is love*  
*The fruit of love is service*  
*The fruit of service is peace*<sup>696</sup>

Mother Teresa emphasized, "Our work is not a profession, but a vocation—chosen to satiate the thirst of Jesus by total surrender: complete, without counting the cost. We know it is like that. Today, let us try to go over those words 'I thirst.'"<sup>697</sup> Mother Teresa encouraged people to realize that "I thirst" as the work of mercy is not an exclusive spirituality of the Missionaries of Charity, but an inclusive spirituality for everyone who is called to transform the world.

In light of liberation theology, Jon Sobrino points out that the work of mercy is "radical."<sup>698</sup> Radical because it is not work for other as only physical action, but rather it is "a

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695. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 77.

696. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 41-2.

697. Mother Teresa, *Where There is Love*, 171.

698. Jon Sobrino, *The Principle of Mercy: Taking the Crucified People from the Cross* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994), 18.

basic attitude toward the suffering of another ... and [mercy] produce[s] joy, gladness, and felicity.”<sup>699</sup> These are not products of self-manipulation toward reality, but a theological perspective on the presence of God. As the psalmist said, “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever” (Psalm 107:1; 136:1). Cynthia Bourgeault says, “When we go rushing ahead into the future or shrinking back into the past, we miss the hand of God, which can only touch us in the now.”<sup>700</sup> Bourgeault is inspired by a modern Sufi, Kabir Helminski, who says, “Whoever makes all cares into one care, the care for simply being present, will be relieved of all care by that Presence, which is the creative power.”<sup>701</sup> Bourgeault and Helminski’s thoughts affirm that the service of Mother Teresa and the Sisters is not social work with an ambitious target, but loving care to the poor as the presence of God’s mercy. Mother Teresa and the Sisters provide space for the presence of the Presence among their works.

In the midst of the poorest of the poor, Mother Teresa uses the concept of “thirsting with joy” to give both meaning to their suffering and a way for them to trust in God’s mercy. Trusting in God’s mercy is a mystical hope, as Bourgeault says,

*Mystical hope* is not tied to a good outcome, to the future. It lives a life of its own, seemingly without reference to external circumstances and condition ... It has something to do with presence [and] not a future good outcome, but the immediate experience of being met, held in communion, by something intimately at hand ... It bears fruit within us at the psychological level in the sensations of strength, joy, and satisfaction: an “unbearable lightness of being.”<sup>702</sup>

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699. Sobrino, *Principle of Mercy*, 18-9.

700. Cynthia Bourgeault, *Mystical Hope: Trusting in the Mercy of God* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 2001), 12.

701. Bourgeault, *Mystical Hope*, 12. See also, Kabir Helminski, *Living Presence: The Sufi Path to Mindfulness and the Essential Self* (New York: TarcherPerigee, 2017).

702. Bourgeault, *Mystical Hope*, 9-10. Emphasis added.

The characteristic of mystical hope shaped Mother Teresa and the Sisters to serve and to assure the poorest of the poor that they are valuable and that they deserve to receive God's mercy. Mother Teresa wanted to be an instrument of God's mercy, as she said,

You see, the aim of our society is to satiate the thirst of Jesus on the cross for love of souls—by *working for the salvation and sanctification of the poor in the slums*. Who could do this better than you and the others who suffer like you? Your sufferings and prayers will be the *chalice* in which we the working members all pour in the love of souls we gather round. Therefore you are just as important and necessary for the fulfillment of our aim. To satiate his thirst we must have a *chalice*—and you and the others, men, women, children, old and young, poor and rich, are all welcome to make the *chalice*. In reality you can do much more while on your bed of pain, than I running on my feet. But you and I together can do all things in him who strengthens us.<sup>703</sup>

Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity held a *chalice* to be the symbolic image of God's mercy to unfold the vulnerable heart of the poorest of the poor, even when the journey is "hidden, silent, and dark."<sup>704</sup> Mother Teresa's service showed "mercy is intimately close to the Hidden Essence and God's 'longing to be known.' The divine act of polarization is an expression of God's compassion for the creation of the world."<sup>705</sup> Sobrino remarks that mercy is an "activity of love [as] an *action*, or more precisely, a *re-action* to someone else's suffering, and ... is motivated *only* by that suffering."<sup>706</sup> Since charity is the work of mercy, the emphasis is not on quantity but on quality. As Mother Teresa said, "I never look at the masses as my responsibility. I look only at the individual. I can love only one person at a time. I can feed only one person at a time. Just one, one, one."<sup>707</sup> Mother Teresa's statement

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703. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 322. Emphasis added. During the funeral service of Mother Teresa, in front of her coffin was placed an empty chalice and a pencil as the ultimate mystical symbols of her life and service (Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 103).

704. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 4.

705. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 4.

706. Sobrino, *Principle of Mercy*, 16.

707. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 77.

affirms the mystical hope above. Mystical hope is about “the immediacy of the now.”<sup>708</sup> By counting the poor one by one, Mother Teresa shows the work of hope itself without putting in advance the total target of the poor to be served. For Mother Teresa, the most important target is not the total number of the poor but the value of each individual who receives God’s mercy through the Missionaries of Charity service. Walters adds,

[The] Missionaries of Charity pursued the works of mercy. Instead of trying to change social structures, they sought to feed, clothe, and love individuals, and that entailed living with those whom they served instead of meeting in boardrooms to study statistics and plan strategy. Mother Teresa, in other words, operated on a small, micro-scale.<sup>709</sup>

This also reminds people that the presence of the kingdom of God in the world comes through the small things, as the Gospels proclaim by using parables of salt (Matt 5:13; Mark 9:50), seed (Matt 13:24; Mark 4:26, Luke 17:6), etc. Transformation begins small.

“I thirst” was an integral part of Mother Teresa’s spirituality from the beginning of her second calling on September 10, 1946, to the day she passed away on September 5, 1997. In her last letter, “My dearest Children,” to the Sisters, Brothers, and volunteers, Mother Teresa wrote:

This brings you Mother’s love, prayer, and blessing that each one of you may be only all for Jesus through Mary. I know that Mother says often—“Be only all for Jesus through Mary”—but that is because that is all Mother wants for you, all Mother wants from you. If in your heart you are only all for Jesus through Mary, and if you do everything only all for Jesus through Mary, you will be a true M.C. (Missionary of Charity).

Thank you for all the loving wishes you sent for the Society Feast [September 10, Inspiration Day]. We have much to thank God for, especially that He has given us Our Lady’s spirit to be the spirit of our Society. Loving Trust and Total Surrender made Our Lady say “Yes” to the message of the angel, and Cheerfulness made her run in haste to serve her cousin Elizabeth. That is so much our life—saying “Yes” to Jesus and running in haste to serve Him in

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708. Bourgeault, *Mystical Hope*, 12.

709. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 76-7.

*the Poorest of the Poor.* Let us keep very close to Our Lady and she will make that same spirit grow in each one of us.

September 10<sup>th</sup> is coming very close. That is another beautiful chance for us to stand near Our Lady, to listen to *the Thirst of Jesus* and to answer with our whole heart. It is only with Our Lady that we can hear Jesus cry: “*I Thirst*” ... Let our gratitude be our strong resolution to quench *the Thirst of Jesus* by lives of real charity—love for Jesus in prayer, love for Jesus in our Sisters, love for Jesus in *the Poorest of the Poor*—*nothing else*.

And now I have heard that Jesus is giving us one more gift. This year, one hundred years after she went home to Jesus. Holy Father is declaring the Little Flower (Saint St. Thérèse of Lisieux) to be a Doctor of the Church. Can you imagine—for doing little things with great love the Church is making her a Doctor, like Saint Augustine and the big Saint Teresa [St. Teresa of Avila]! It is just like Jesus said in the Gospel to the one who was seated in the lowest place: “Friend, come up higher.” So let us keep very small and follow the Little Flower’s way of trust and love and joy, and we will fulfill Mother’s promise to give saints to Mother Church.<sup>710</sup>

“I thirst” as the core of Mother Teresa’s spirituality is the essence of vocation or calling. Parker Palmer affirms that “our deepest calling is to grow into our own authentic selfhood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we *ought* to be. As we do so, we will also find our path of authentic service in the world. True vocation joins self and service ... [Vocation is] ‘the place where your deep gladness meets the world’s deep need.’”<sup>711</sup> Palmer highlights that a vocation is about an integration of the self and action, as vocation needs a holistic presence in the midst of reality. Mother Teresa discovered this place early on: “I was only twelve years old and lived at home with my parents when I first felt the desire to become a nun ... We had very good priests who were helping the boys and girls to follow their vocation according to the call of God. It was then that I first knew I had a vocation to the poor.”<sup>712</sup> In Mother Teresa’s home congregation in Skopje, the priest often shared stories of

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710. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 227-8. Emphasis added.

711. Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 16.

712. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 4.



missionaries' works from letters of his colleague serving in India. The vocation of Mother Teresa was deeply rooted in her teenage years, and the vocation continued to grow throughout her life. As a teenager, Mother Teresa learned about the work of mercy across countries through the self-transcendence of missionaries, as told to her by her priest. Mother Teresa was inspired by these stories, and at only eighteen years old, was moved to travel to India to fulfill her vocation.<sup>713</sup>

### ***Pure Joy: Cheerfulness***

Mother Teresa took seriously the need for Sisters to have cheerfulness or pure joy. Like cheerfulness, joy is not simply how a person appears externally, but is a way of life that encompasses both their external and internal self. Joy, like cheerfulness, is written in the Missionaries of Charity's constitution:

Renunciation is one of these places. Our life of penance will have that twofold quality of Renunciation and *Joy*, since it is deeply rooted in the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection. *Joy* is indeed the fruit of the Holy Spirit and a characteristic mark of the Kingdom of God, for God is *joy*. Christ wanted to share His *joy* with His apostles "... that my *joy* may be in you, and that your *joy* may be full" (John 15:11 RSV). *Joy* is prayer, the sign of our generosity, selflessness, and close and continual union with God. *Joy* is love—a *joyful* heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love.<sup>714</sup>

Joy has both psychological and theological bases. When faced with the terrible poverty in Calcutta, Mother Teresa responded not by blaming or escaping the poverty, but rather by transforming her inner perspective on suffering into a positive energy. This kind of transformation is a form of resistance and resilience. She wrote:

Let us all keep the joy of loving God in our hearts, and share this joy of loving one another as he loves each other of us. God bless you.

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713. Mother Teresa was born on August 26, 1910 and she left Skopje for India, with a brief stay in Dublin, on December 1, 1928.

714. Egan, and Egan, *Suffering into Joy*, 45. Emphasis added.

Joy is prayer, joy is strength, joy is love, joy is a net of love by which you can catch souls. God loves a cheerful giver. The best way to show our gratitude to God and the people is to accept everything with joy. Never let anything so fill you with sorrow as to make you forget the joy of the risen Christ. We all long for heaven where God is, but we have it in our power to be in heaven with him right now—to be happy with him at this every moment. But being happy with him now means loving as he loves, helping as he helps, giving as he gives, serving as he serves, rescuing as he rescues, being with him 24 hours a day, and touching him in his distressing disguise in the poor and suffering.

A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love. It is the gift of the Spirit, a share in the joy of Jesus, living in the soul.<sup>715</sup>

For Mother Teresa, joy is based on the conviction of the presence of the heavenly God in every single moment of life. This presence is embedded in the services to the poor, who are part of God's self. The moment of helping the poor was the moment of being with Jesus, who is thirsty. This reveals the spirituality of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity; "I thirst" is harmonious between two aspects: suffering and joy, which together lead to "thirsting with joy."

In light of liberation theology, joy is indeed a triumph over sadness as a dimensional part of resurrection. When people are living in joy, they have the capacity to celebrate their life in a communal setting. John Sobrino quotes Gustavo Gutiérrez saying, "The opposite of joy is sadness, not suffering."<sup>716</sup> In the midst of overwhelming suffering in Calcutta, Mother Teresa mandated that joy always be present in daily life. She told her Sisters to, "Keep the joy of loving God, loving Jesus in your heart, and share that joy with all you meet."<sup>717</sup> Mother Teresa put suffering in the midst of life which is much bigger than suffering itself, so a

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715. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 177.

716. Jon Sobrino, "The Latin American Martyrs: Summons and Grace for the Church," in *The Option for the Poor in Christian Theology*, ed. Daniel G. Groody (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 113.

717. Egan and Egan, *Suffering into Joy*, 45.

people can embrace it. Each person will be able to live in joy as long as he or she lives in a community. This is true, she asserts, even in the last minutes of life: “The Home for the Dying is a place where the poor die within sight of someone who cares. Further, ‘We help them all die in peace with God. I don’t think anyone here has died without making peace with God.’”<sup>718</sup> Mother Teresa affirms that suffering is real and should not be denied, but in the midst of suffering there is another reality. This is the embracing love of the Missionaries of Charity. The suffering of a single person is embraced by the communal love of others, which transforms the suffering into real joy.

The fourth vow of the Missionaries of Charity is *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*. Through this vow, Mother Teresa showed that joy is possible even when a person does not have enough power to change the multiple layers of suffering in a given situation. This is achieved by being in radical community with the poor. Mother Teresa said, “*My true community is the poor.*”<sup>719</sup> Community lessens a person’s feeling of powerlessness because they know they are not alone. Community is an inherent part of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity’s work because of their devotion to following the way of Jesus, whose entire existence can be said to have centered on the formation of community. Given these things, Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity become a symbol that love is still a possibility, even in the midst of suffering. Moreover, Mother Teresa affirmed, “Keep the joy of loving God always in your heart, and share this joy with all you meet—and so become an *instrument of peace.*”<sup>720</sup> Joy becomes real among people who share and give of their own selves. Then each person becomes the instrument of peace within any circumstance, even in Calcutta as “the dark holes of the poor.”

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718. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 90.

719. Egan and Egan, *Suffering into Joy*, 89. Emphasis added.

720. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 133. Emphasis added.

The vow to give *wholehearted free service to the poor* shows special character and activity. Mother Teresa says the aim is “to ensure faithfulness to our calling, to safeguard our poverty, and to force us to trust fully in God. Our calling is to be busy, only with the poor. Jesus called us to serve him in the very poor. There are enough of them in the world.”<sup>721</sup> This is shown in the formula of the vows:

The person who receives the vows then tells the Sister,

“By the authority entrusted to me, I accept your vows in the name of the church for the community of the Missionaries of Charity. I commend you earnestly to God that you may fulfil your dedication, which is united to his Eucharistic Sacrifice.”

The newly professed goes to the altar, places on it the document of her profession, which she has just read, and leaves it there to be united to the offering of the Body and Blood of Christ. She is to be a victim and a witness of God’s love.

The celebrant proceeds to offer the Holy Sacrifice. At the time of communion, the words of Paul to the Galatians, expressing his proud profession of faith, are sung: “I am nailed with Christ on the Cross; I live, not by my own life, but Christ Lives in me!” (Gal. 2:19-20).<sup>722</sup>

Mother Teresa laid out a basic theological foundation of charity through an integration of *wholehearted free service to the poor* and pure joy, based on the Crucified Jesus, practiced liturgically and practically in daily life.

### ***Radical Poverty: A Contemplative in the Heart of the World***

In serving the unwanted and unloved people of Calcutta, Mother Teresa came to deeply identify with the poorest of the poor as a part of her spiritual darkness. Yet instead of being consumed by the darkness, she was able to transform it into a capacity to love. Mother Teresa said, “People today are hungry for love, for understanding love which is much greater

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721. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 249.

722. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 98-9.

and which is the only answer to loneliness and great poverty.”<sup>723</sup> Moreover, she explained, “Poverty is not created by God, it’s made by you and me. We are responsible [for it] because we don’t share. Even God will not force us to do good. We must choose to do the good.”<sup>724</sup> For this reason, Mother Teresa preferred to embrace the poverty as a transformational way to love God and others, rather than to cure it. This is why poverty and wholehearted free service to the poor are part of the vows the Missionaries of Charity take. On October 7, 1953, Mother Teresa and her companion took four vows: “poverty, chastity, obedience, and charity.”<sup>725</sup> The complete formula of the vows is:

I, Sister ... [the name of the Sister who takes a vow], vow for life chastity, poverty, obedience, and *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* according to the constitutions of the Missionaries of Charity. I gave myself with my whole heart to this religious community so that by the grace of the Holy Spirit and the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary I may seek *to practice perfect charity* in the service of God and the church.<sup>726</sup>

The vows show how the Missionaries of Charity live in radical poverty by choice. As Mother Teresa says, “Our people are poor by force, but *our poverty is of our own choice*. We want to be poor like Christ who, being rich, chose to be born and live and work among the poor.”<sup>727</sup> This is the radical contemplative way which shows that poverty is not an obstacle to love, but a power for love.

For Mother Teresa, *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* is particularly important in this sense “to ensure faithfulness to our calling, to safeguard our poverty, and to

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723. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 233.

724. Conroy, *Mother*, 149. See also, Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 31.

725. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 41.

726. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 98. Emphasis added.

727. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 95. Emphasis added.

force us to trust fully in God.”<sup>728</sup> This vow brings freedom to the Missionaries of Charity in serving to the poor while expecting nothing in return. This altruistic self-emptying or *kenosis* brings a person into a profound relationship with God because it is produced by a love akin to the love that led God to empty Himself for us. Lanzetta proposes, “Only in such self-emptying will we receive the realization of divine love for all.”<sup>729</sup> In line with Lanzetta, Mitchell highlights that “in Christian spirituality ... *kenosis* is not to be contemplated only, but lived.”<sup>730</sup> *Kenosis* is Christ’s virtue.

The Missionaries of Charity’s constitution states, “We and the poor will rely entirely on divine Providence. We are not ashamed to beg from door to door as a member of Christ, who himself lived on alms during the public life and whom we serve in the sick and the poor.”<sup>731</sup> Living in radical poverty does not mean to be masochistic or to make the poor an object of service. Rather, using the vow of *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*, Mother Teresa elevates poverty. They, the Missionaries of Charity and the poor, are on the same level of humanity under God’s providence. Both have “an absolute value, a God-given personality; both are called to the bliss of heaven, as children of their heavenly Father. The receiver reacts; the reaction affects the giver, leads both to rejoice together.”<sup>732</sup> Mother Teresa and the Sisters chose to live in poverty in order to walk with the poor in the ongoing journey to self-transcendence, through practicing radical poverty with faithfulness to the mystery of God in joyfulness and blessings.

Based on this, Mother Teresa argues,

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728. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 249.

729. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 89.

730. Mitchell, *Spirituality and Emptiness*, 29.

731. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 95.

732. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 252.

I insist on saying that we are *not* social workers. We are really *contemplatives in the heart of the world*. We may be doing social work in the eyes of the people, but we are really contemplatives in the heart of the world ... For we are touching the body of Christ twenty-four hours! We have twenty-four hours in His presence, you, and I.<sup>733</sup>

Poverty for the Sisters then is not labor, but a contemplative practice that forms the spiritual center of their lives. This is shown in both their habits and their living quarters. Their clothes are very simple: a white sari with blue lines, a crucifix on the left shoulder, a simple cotton bag, and sandals. Each Sister is allowed only three saris: one to wear, one to wash, and one to dry. In terms of house, “the Sisters sleep in dormitories, without any privacy, like the poor who live in crowded slums or tenements.”<sup>734</sup> Radical poverty is a contemplative practice of simplicity which gives impact to the Sister’s service. As Edward Le Joly describes,

Once, to another sister, Mother Teresa said, “Sister, you leave for South India.”

“When, Mother?”

“This evening, sister, by the first train that goes there.”

“There is no problem of packing for us,” said sister. “Since we have nothing, we are ready in ten minutes.”<sup>735</sup>

Mother Teresa emphasizes poverty and self-sacrifice in the practice of love. It is a tender way of loving and she stayed true to her vows even in the face of the emerging 21<sup>st</sup> century. When cell phones came out, her close companion Fr. Leo Maasburg suggested that she provide the superiors in each house or region with a cell phone as it would save the order a lot of money. Mother Teresa declined, saying, “Father, we have a vow of poverty, not a vow of economy.”<sup>736</sup> Simplicity of life is the way of life by being contemplative in the heart of the world through radical poverty.

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733. Mother Teresa, *Where There is Love*, 213. Emphasis added.

734. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 95.

735. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 94.

736. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 183.

***Radical Compassion: “Love until it hurts!”***

Christ suffered. He experienced poverty. He was the object of jealousy. He was derided, ridiculed and humiliated. He knew torture and He was then crucified. Christ also knew love, kindness, compassion and sympathy. He loved until it hurt. He understood utter loneliness and despair, yet *He loved until it hurt*.

[ ... ]

There is so much love in us all, but we are often too shy to express our love and we keep it bottled up inside us. We must learn to love, *to love until it hurts* and we will then know how to accept love.

We must be a channel of peace.

We must *love until it hurts*.

We must be Christ.

We must not be afraid to show our love.

Love God, love God in the womb. Love God in the unborn Child. Love God in the family. Love God in your neighbor. *Love until it hurts.*<sup>737</sup>

A part of Mother Teresa’s speech, above, proposes a radical way of compassion by identifying a correlation between *being hurt* and *loving* in light of her imitation of Christ. Using Jesus as the patron of radical compassion, Mother Teresa affirms, “*Love to be real must cost; it must hurt; it must empty us of self.*”<sup>738</sup> Her compassion is deeply rooted in Jesus’ love. By receiving God’s love, the individual is invited to give love to others beyond any identification, such as gender or religion. Mother Teresa and the Sisters practiced radical care for the poorest of the poor as the way of Jesus in order to transform human life. Frank Rogers says:

For Jesus, compassion inspires a genuine loving regard that flows freely from the heart. It is rooted in the restorative compassion of God that is given to all humanity. The radicality of his path is that the healing power of sacred

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737. Daphne Rae, *Love Until It Hurts* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publisher, 1981), 45, 47. Rae notes that the quotation above is a part of Mother Theresa’s speech at the Cathedral of New Delhi. Emphasis added.

738. Conroy, *Mother Teresa’s Lessons*, 93. Emphasis is original.



compassion holds us precisely where we are—in our fears and angers, our shames and suppressions, even in our resistance to wanting to love at all.<sup>739</sup>

Compassion is a radical action because it must be rooted in a genuine love of one person for others, even though it is costly because when practicing compassion, he or she struggles with his or her inner-self. As Mother Teresa said, “*Love until it hurts.*” For Rogers, all human beings are “fashioned from a sacred blueprint,” as *imago Dei*, and invited to practice compassion.<sup>740</sup> The existence as *imago Dei* is to the extent that “God’s essence is compassion, our essence, likewise, is compassion.”<sup>741</sup> In practicing compassion, Christians, as followers of the Way, should follow Jesus’ spiritual path of radical compassion which has “three dimensions: a deepening of our connection to the compassion of God, a restoration to humanity fully loved and alive, and an increase to our capacity to be instruments of compassion toward others in the world.”<sup>742</sup> The three dimensions are rooted in the genuine love of Jesus in practicing compassion by being “radically inclusive” and promoting “a kin-dom of justice” as the politics of compassion.<sup>743</sup> These three dimensions are applied in

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739. Frank Rogers Jr., *The Way of Jesus Compassion in Practice* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2016), 21.

740. Rogers, *Way of Jesus Compassion*, 17.

741. Rogers, *Way of Jesus Compassion*, 17.

742. Rogers, *Way of Jesus Compassion*, 23-4.

743. Rogers, *Way of Jesus Compassion*, 18. Rogers refers to Ada María Isasi-Díaz who coins the term *kin-dom of God*. Rogers explains, “Jesus advocates the coming of the kin-dom of God. Whatever its otherworldly dimensions, for Jesus the kin-dom of God very much includes becoming embodied ‘on earth as it is in heaven.’ God’s kin-dom is how the world would be governed if God were king instead of Caesar, Herod, the high priest, the rich, the city elite, the racially entitled, or any other person or entity of privilege that rises to power and influence. God’s kin-dom reflects the character and essence of God” (page 18). See also, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, “Solidarity: Love of Neighbor in the 1980s,” in *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*, ed. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite and Mary Potter Engel (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1990), 31-40.

Mother Teresa's way of compassion. In her service to the poorest of the poor, Mother Teresa highlights:

To serve the poor we must love them. In order to love the poor, we must first know them. And to know them means to know God. Then we must live with the poor: and to live with them means to live with God. Lastly, we must give our hearts in order to love them, and our hands to serve them, and this means to love God and serve him.<sup>744</sup>

For Mother Teresa, compassion is not simply a sentimental emotion or making the poor mere recipients of service, but rather *a total immersion into the lives*, both externally and spiritually, of others through God's love. August 17, 1948 was the stepping stone of radical compassion for Mother Teresa, when she took off her Loreto habit, donned a cheap white sari with a blue border, left the convent, and considered "absolute poverty" as her new vocational life.<sup>745</sup>

The unceasing love of Mother Teresa for the poorest of the poor seems to go hand in hand with unending criticism of her and the Missionaries of Charity. Some of these criticisms came from other Christians, to which Mother Teresa responded wisely, "There are many congregations that spoil the rich, and so surely it will not hurt if one congregation [the Missionaries of Charity] spoils the poor."<sup>746</sup> In practicing compassion as a radical way of Christianity, compassion is not without confrontation, as Donald McNeill, Douglas Morrison, and Henri Nouwen stress:

Compassion does not exclude confrontation. On the contrary, confrontation is an integral part of compassion. Confrontation can indeed be an authentic expression of compassion. The whole prophetic tradition makes this clear, and Jesus is no exception. Sadly enough, Jesus has been presented for so long

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744. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 221.

745. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 121.

746. Maasburg, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 40.

as a meek and mild person that we seldom realize how differently the Gospels depict him.<sup>747</sup>

Thus, radical compassion is following Jesus in radical discipleship by receiving grace and giving love to others, even though criticism from others cannot be avoided. Compassion without confrontation “fades quickly into fruitless sentimental commiseration.”<sup>748</sup> Surely, the fourth vow, the *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*, is a critique by Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity against the structural injustice for the poorest of the poor, including thousands of lepers, who are discriminated against socially and religiously. In the midst of a social and religious understanding that anyone who touches or is touched by a leper is cursed, Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity choose non-violent confrontation through a restorative way of providing compassion to the lepers in their service with the slogan: “Touch the leper with your compassion.”<sup>749</sup> For Mother Teresa, this was the only way to restore dignity and bring hope to the thousands of lepers who are categorized as the poorest of the poor. Both criticizing and being criticized are consequences for Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity in their radical way of compassion, which is rooted in love.

To sum up, the mystical way of Mother Teresa, as I described above, is a development of the mystical moment during her ordinary experience on a trip to Darjeeling. The ordinary experience became an extraordinary one because of her consciousness as the subjective presence in the midst of the Calcuttan people in the train station, which led to the desire “I thirst” as the intersection of divine and human longing. The trip to Darjeeling

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747. Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison, and Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1982), 124.

748. McNeill, Morrison, and Nouwen, *Compassion*, 124.

749. Mother Teresa, *Call to Mercy*, 67.

became “the awakening self” of Mother Teresa and it was followed by her transformational journey.<sup>750</sup> David Benner explains that a transformational journey moves

backward and forward, up and down, as we prepare for a shift to a larger self and expanded consciousness. Transformation is at least as much about descent as ascent, death as a new life, loss as new discovery. This is because the process of becoming more than we now are often requires re-formation that must precede transformation, and healing that must come before increasing wholeness.<sup>751</sup>

The process of becoming began when Mother Teresa listened contemplatively to the cry from the bottom of ‘the dark holes of the poor’ in Calcutta. “The dark holes of poor” enlightened Mother Teresa in her true self by affirming that her “true community is the poor.” For Mother Teresa, the poor are not the object of her and the Sisters’ services, but rather, in Lonergan’s term, part of an intersubjectivity relationship: subject to subject and not subject to object. In light of mysticism, her “true self is one with God, one with the universe, one with all that is. This is the self that knows no subject and object.”<sup>752</sup> In “I thirst,” Mother Teresa found an integration between divinity and humanity in her true self, as the basic foundation of the charity is love. Frequently, Mother Teresa affirms that through the Sisters’ services, the poor will see God’s love. As Mother Teresa says, “We bear witness to the love of God’s presence ... and if Catholics, Protestants, Buddhists, or agnostics become for this reason better men [and women]—simply better—we will be satisfied. Growing up in love they will be nearer to God and will find him in his goodness.”<sup>753</sup> In other words, Mother Teresa proposes that through charity as love, people see God in all things and all things in God, going beyond

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750. David G. Benner, *Spirituality and the Awakening Self: The sacred Journey of Transformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2012), 67.

751. Benner, *Spirituality and the Awakening Self*, 68.

752. Johnston, “*Arise, My Love ...*,” 107.

753. Scott, *Love That Made Mother Teresa*, 100-1.

boundaries: social status, ethnicity, gender, and religion, even agnosticism and atheism. Love beyond identities is the universal mystical way of self-transcendence for humanity.

### Correlation of Her Mystical Way and Lonergan's Notion of Self-Transcendence

As I explained above, the mystical way of Mother Teresa shows the ongoing self-transcendence of her response to the reality of the poorest of the poor in Calcutta. Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity express their mystical way through concrete love in the midst of society. Teasdale states that mystical experience is “practical” and “experiential.”<sup>754</sup> The elements of practical and experiential relate to particular situations, which are not abstract, and connect to empirical experiences, which are real. Thus, the mystical experience of Mother Teresa is “here and now.”<sup>755</sup> In this section, I will discuss the mystical way of Mother Teresa in light of Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence in relation to conversion as “a radical transformation on which follows, on all levels of living, an interlocked series of changes and developments.”<sup>756</sup> The changes and developments occur through intellectual conversion, moral conversion, and religious conversion in the transcendental precepts: experience, understanding, judging, and deciding, which together lead to authenticity.

In this discussion, I will explore Mother Teresa's self-transcendental process in each conversion based on three moments of her journey, which show the gradual work from data of sense to data of consciousness. Mother Teresa's unrestricted desire to know led her to

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754. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 22.

755. Teasdale, *Mystical Heart*, 22.

756. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13.

know the poor more deeply by regularly visiting the slums while she was a Loreto sister. To discern her second call or “the call within a call,” Mother Teresa set aside her Loreto habit and lived outside the convent for five years. In this period of time, she developed her data of sense and data of consciousness about the poorest of the poor. As a result, Mother Teresa found the *terminal values* which became her commitment to love the poor in a wholehearted way, and in turn, led to establishing the Missionaries of Charity. I will analyze Mother Teresa’s momentous journey within the three conversions which lead to self-transcendence.

### ***Intellectual Conversion***

September 10, 1946 was the greatest ‘mystical moment’ in Mother Teresa’s life, The Day of Inspiration as she called it, in which she experienced a second call or ‘the call within a call.’ The mystical moment has a background of Mother Teresa’s experience as a Loreto Sister; as I quoted previously, Mother Teresa said, “... *I was very happy* and to go out in the street to serve the poorest of the poor. It was in that train, I heard the call to give up all and follow Him into the slums—to serve Him in the poorest of the poor ...”<sup>757</sup> This affirms that her mystical moment did not come from a vacuum but rather grew from her attentiveness toward the poorest of the poor on the streets and in the slums of Calcutta. Since her arrival in Calcutta in early 1929, the poor became Mother Teresa’s primary data of sense in her experience as a Loreto sister, as the Loreto convent is located in the midst of the tremendous poverty of Calcutta. By her unrestricted desire to know, Mother Teresa drove the data of her sense into the data of her consciousness by visiting the slums on a weekly basis. These visits were not part of the Loreto mission, as the Loreto Sisters’ mandate is education. Her visits to the slums were a personal desire to know the poor, as “not merely an interesting fact but *a*

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757. Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*, 40. Emphasis added.

calling.”<sup>758</sup> As Mother Teresa said, she was very happy while visiting the poor because visiting was her self-transcendence. Through self-transcendence, Mother Teresa is being present and listening to the call. Palmer stresses that calling or vocation “does not mean a goal that I pursue. It means a calling that I hear.”<sup>759</sup> To hear from the source of the voice is the most fundamental type of knowing.

Mother Teresa’s years of weekly visits to the slums show her intentionality as the subjective presence. Her self-transcendence through subjective presence by the desire to know answers the question: Who are the poorest of the poor in Calcutta? Only through her intentionality of visiting does Mother Teresa come to the objectivity of the poorest of the poor. There are levels of consciousness that occur in Mother Teresa’s insight, as Lonergan explains that “[t]o know the good, it must know the real; to know the real, it must know the true; to know the true, it must know the intelligible; to know the intelligible, it must attend to the data.”<sup>760</sup> Mother Teresa attends to the data of sense in the poor, and through her subjective presence on the streets and in the slums, she reaches the data of consciousness. Based on her inquiry, the poor as the data of sense showed only the physical need, but the poorest of the poor in Calcutta disclose holistic poverty as the data of consciousness. By questioning the data of sense: what, why, who, how, and what for, Mother Teresa moves from “the attention to experience to intelligent understanding.”<sup>761</sup> Mother Teresa finds that the “poorest of the poor” is not only about the problem of material poverty, but also social structure, and religious discrimination, as the Dalit are outcasts, a class of untouchable

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758. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 51. Emphasis added.

759. Palmer, *Lets Your Life Speak*, 4.

760. Lonergan, *Method*, 13.

761. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 95.

humans, especially these who have leprosy.<sup>762</sup> Members of the Dalit have no self-identity or dignity as persons or as a social group. By being a desiring subject, Mother Teresa draws to the valuable objectivity and meaning of the poorest of the poor, that they are poor in humanity and poor in love. That is the truth she gained from her inquiry through experience and understanding of the subjective presence, influencing Mother Teresa's judgment and attempts to be objective, due to her being an authentic subject. Lonergan explains that "the criteria of objectivity are not just criteria of ocular vision; they are compounded criteria of experiencing, of understanding, of judging, and of believing. The reality known is not just looked at; it is given in experience, organized and extrapolated by understanding, posited by judgment and belief."<sup>763</sup> Based on the objectivity process, Mother Teresa decided to leave the Loreto Sisters and establish the Missionaries of Charity as her authenticity in self-transcendence. Snedden highlights that the desire of the human spirit can draw an individual "to attentiveness, to courageous pursuit of truth, to actions for the good for others. With enlightenment from the Spirit, we can recognize even the inner suffering of dryness and darkness we have been going through as a real God experience."<sup>764</sup> Mother Teresa transformed her personal desire to a reasonable calling of *wholehearted free service to the poor*, as she says, "Our calling is to be busy, only with the poor. Jesus called us to serve him in the very poor. There are enough of them in the world."<sup>765</sup> Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity live like the poor by choice.

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762. There were thirty thousand lepers living in Calcutta's slums at that time. See Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 47.

763. Lonergan, *Method*, 238.

764. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 91.

765. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 249.



For Mother Teresa, the objectivity process of her work as a Loreto Sister and her vocation as an authentic subject in the context of Calcutta took seventeen years (1929-1946), through the process of “genuine attention, genuine intelligence, genuine reasonableness, [and] genuine responsibility.”<sup>766</sup> Her objectivity process as a discernment needs an “obeying reality” which refers to the precepts of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible.<sup>767</sup> Haughey argues that obeying reality helps an individual be an authentic subject, just as Mother Teresa becomes a knower. By obeying reality, Mother Teresa converts to reality and obtains knowledge. Haughey quotes Mark Morelli on Lonergan’s thought: “Knowledge, in the proper sense, is knowledge of reality; knowledge is intrinsically objective; knowledge is the intrinsic relation of knowing to being; being and reality are identical.”<sup>768</sup> This affirms that intellectual conversion plays an essential role for Mother Teresa, with *knowledge of reality* as the basic foundation of her love for the poorest of the poor. In other words, Mother Teresa does a critical realism—or in Lonergan’s epistemology, particularly on the notion of objectivity<sup>769</sup> as through the process of experiencing and understanding the poorest of the poor—in which she makes an existential judgment to embrace the poorest of the poor as her brothers and sisters, and to love them by proclaiming “*My true community is the poor.*” Through her conversion to the reality of Calcutta as “the dark holes of the poor,” Mother Teresa “knows precisely what [she] is doing when [she] is knowing.”<sup>770</sup> This intellectual conversion inspires Mother Teresa to create a new form of charity. Lonergan explains that the intellectual conversion is “a new beginning, a fresh start.

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766. Lonergan, *Method*, 265.

767. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 3.

768. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 4.

769. Lonergan, *Insight*, 399-409; *Method*, 262-5.

770. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

It opens the way to ever further clarifications and development.”<sup>771</sup> Through critical reflection on the reality of the poor, intellectual conversion opens up Mother Teresa to “the truth” of the poorest of the poor, and leads her to reform charity more inclusively, as universal value. Intellectual conversion is the basic foundation of establishing the Missionaries of Charity. Mother Teresa’s intellectual conversion to reality draws her to the next conversion, the moral conversion which assigns meaning or value.

### ***Moral Conversion***

On August 17, 1948, Mother Teresa continued her conversion process when she took off her Loreto habit, changed into a white sari with blue borders, and walked out of the Loreto convent to live in an upstairs room of a Catholic family’s house in Calcutta. Her experiencing, understanding, and judging of the poor in Calcutta led Mother Teresa to decide that the next step in finding the meaning or value of the knowledge of reality was by entering deeper into “the dark holes of the poor.” On the recommendation of the Papal Catholic Constitution and under the supervision of the Bishop of Calcutta, Mother Teresa discerned “what is the truly worth-while, the truly good, and the truly valuable” in following “the call within a call.”<sup>772</sup> The way of calling that Mother Teresa chose was to live outside the Loreto convent. For years, Mother Teresa lived in the upstairs room in Calcutta. That was the way of moral conversion that she chose.

As I described previously, Mother Teresa followed St. Thérèse of Lisieux as her spiritual patroness in the way of joy, love, the “Little Way,” and quenching the thirst of Jesus. In other words, traditionally, Mother Teresa was influenced by the value of Carmelite

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771. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

772. Braman, *Meaning*, 64.

spirituality. When it did not seem enough for her, Mother Teresa sought her own empirical values by living closely among the poorest of the poor. Thus, by living faithfully in Carmelite spirituality and serving in the slums, Mother Teresa, as the subject, became the center and the source of her moral conversion as part of her self-transcendence. Haughey highlights that moral conversion is “the movement of the subject from impulsive self-regarding acts to the choice of values that are self-transcending.”<sup>773</sup> Moral conversion was a way of being authentic for Mother Teresa in which, on one hand, she became a genuine or original self, and on the other hand, she contextualizes St. Thérèse of Lisieux’s spirituality into what is truly good for the poor in Calcutta and beyond. By living among the poorest of the poor, Mother Teresa develops her understanding and judging in finding value or meaning. McCarthy highlights the dynamic nature of the concrete good, stating:

Particular courses of action create new practical situations that require new questions, insights, judgments, and decisions. The concreteness of the good is also inseparable from human historicity. The moral agent is always a situated subject, living in a particular culture, participating in a network of social institutions, actively seeking a good that is simultaneously personal and social. Within the subject’s social and cultural embeddedness, functional differentiation is increasingly at work. Individual agents perform different practical tasks and bear different responsibilities. Because of their distinct social roles, they are responsible for different kinds of knowledge; they master different arts and skills. Although there is a common fund of virtues moral subjects should gradually acquire, they exercise those virtues in different ways depending on their particular roles, responsibilities, and obligations.<sup>774</sup>

According to McCarthy’s explanation above, St. Thérèse of Lisieux and Mother Teresa lived in different eras, with the distance between the two figures including more than a half century, as well as different social and cultural contexts. Mother Teresa seeks what is good and what is valuable, and she incorporates them into her life. In light of moral conversion,

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773. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 4.

774. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 43.

Mother Teresa's mystical way is existential and original in which she reformed Carmelite spirituality into the Missionaries of Charity. The reformation perspectives are that a human is a holistic being, the poor are not an object of charity but a part of the community of the Sisters, and charity, as one of the cardinal virtues, does not only belong to the Church but is a universal virtue for all people. Mother Teresa's moral conversion as an inner transformation of the value of the poor affected charity around the world, the Missionaries of Charity having spread to more than 125 countries. This is evidence that for moral conversion, "one's choice must be one's own to be moral."<sup>775</sup> Mother Teresa and the Sisters are authentic subjective presences which create a new form and meaning of charity as love. Thus, value or meaning is particular and universal, personal and communal.

As I described in the previous chapter, Lonergan defines value on several scales: vital values, social values, cultural values, personal values, and religious values.<sup>776</sup> Mother Teresa takes into account the variety of value scales to find the *terminal values* as "the foundational principles in the self-transcendent subject."<sup>777</sup> The *terminal values* are "discovered through true evaluative judgments and actualized through responsible decisions and actions."<sup>778</sup> For Mother Teresa, the *terminal values* became her mystical way; these values are radical oneness, radical openness, pure joy, radical poverty, and radical compassion. Mother Teresa's mystical ways show her moral conversion which is "the inner transformation of the person that flows out to effect an outer transformation of the world."<sup>779</sup> For her, the *terminal values* are not abstract norms but rather practical life. Moral conversion is not reaching for idealism,

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775. Haughey, "Three Conversions," 5.

776. See footnote 353.

777. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 45.

778. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 45.

779. Braman, *Meaning*, 67.

but transforming reality for well-being. In other words, for Mother Teresa, mysticism is a practical way of life. Thus, mystical life is about social life where authenticity is manifested in the integration of being and doing.

Moral conversion or conversion to meaning or value is never static, but rather dynamic. Haughey says that moral conversion is “always incomplete.”<sup>780</sup> He highlights Lonergan who states that in moral conversion, there is a dynamic process of progress and decline in which “[o]ne has *to keep scrutinizing* one’s intentional responses to values and their implication scales of preference. One has to listen to criticism and to protest. One has to remain ready to learn from others.”<sup>781</sup> From the poorest of the poor, Mother Teresa and the Sisters keep learning the value of poverty and continue serving humanity through charity as love. Mother Teresa kept learning the value through her agonizing experience of the darkness of God as shown in her private journal, *Come Be My Light*, where she describes her struggle in practicing the *terminal values*. Braman highlights, “In the choice of terminal values the person is involved in the dialectical process of progress and decline.”<sup>782</sup> This affirms that moral conversion is a lifelong process. Lonergan stresses that one has “to keep scrutinizing one’s intentional responses to values and their implicit scales of preference.”<sup>783</sup> In her mystical way, Mother Teresa’s inquiry of finding the *terminal values* was under the *cloud of unknowing* throughout her life. The moral conversion of Mother Teresa is dynamic and is rooted in the spirituality of “I thirst” as an everlasting longing of humanity, which needs to be a desirable fulfilment of the world.

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780. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 6.

781. Lonergan, *Method*, 240. Emphasis added.

782. Braman, *Meaning*, 66.

783. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

## ***Religious Conversion***

On October 7, 1953, five years after Mother Teresa left the Loreto convent, she, along with her companions, took four vows: “poverty, chastity, obedience, and charity.”<sup>784</sup> On that day, Mother Teresa established the Missionaries of Charity by stepping into religious conversion as conversion to love. Most religious orders have only three vows: poverty, chastity, and obedience. However, the Missionaries of Charity added a fourth vow, charity, which is defined in the formula *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*. This formula shows the religious or affective conversion of Mother Teresa and the Sisters through concern for others by being-in-love with a specific way of charity. Lonergan stresses that “religious conversion means no more than a new and more efficacious ground for the pursuit of intellectual and moral ends. Religious loving is without conditions, qualifications, reservations; it is with all one’s heart and all one’s soul and all one’s mind and all one’s strength.”<sup>785</sup> Religious conversion leads to loving with total being and doing, as a fulfilment of practicing *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* throughout the lives of the Missionaries of Charity.

Mother Teresa affirms that joy or cheerfulness is a mystical way of being as a Sister of the Missionaries of Charity. For Mother Teresa, “a joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love,” and it should be received as God’s gift and should be shared as love for others, more specifically with the poorest of the poor.<sup>786</sup> This joy expresses Mother Teresa’s fulfilment of the desire to love, as Lonergan stresses:

[F]ulfilment brings a *deep-set joy* that can remain despite humiliation, failure, privation, pain, betrayal, desertion. That fulfilment brings a *radical peace*, the peace that the world cannot give. That fulfilment bears *fruit in a love* of one’s

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784. Walters, *St. Teresa of Calcutta*, 41.

785. Lonergan, *Method*, 242.

786. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 177.

neighbor that strives mightily to bring about the kingdom of God on this earth.”<sup>787</sup>

Mother Teresa’s decision to love the poor is a radical way of “thirsting with joy” as the way to satisfy Jesus and the poor as the capacity for self-transcendence. As Mother Teresa said, “It was not just the poorest of the poor, but seeing Jesus in distressing disguise in the form that was very difficult, very hard to discover, but believing that Jesus is there, that Jesus is thirsty, trying to be with Him.”<sup>788</sup> Thus, religious conversion transforms Mother Teresa from an “existential subject into a subject in love.”<sup>789</sup> Love and the subject cannot be separate. Braman highlights that being in love with God is “[b]eing in love with the divine ground [which] reveals to us to whom we are ultimately responsible and to whom we ultimately respond in self-transcending love.”<sup>790</sup> Mother Teresa and the Sisters became the incarnate subjects of love and joy in the midst of overwhelming suffering in Calcutta. Through the presence of the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa offers a transformation of suffering to real joy based on the communal basis as she says, over and over, “My true community is the poor.” Thus, religious conversion brings joy to both oneself and others.

The interior of religious conversion is the cooperative divine grace and human nature or *sanctifying grace*. McCarthy highlights, “Religious conversion occurs when the existential subject responds to the gift of God’s love in a *wholehearted way*.”<sup>791</sup> Mother Teresa and the Sisters took *being in love with God* as their lives’ principle: *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor*. *Being in love with God* is not an elite way of love for a particular person

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787. Lonergan, *Method*, 105. Emphasis added.

788. Mother Teresa, *Call to Mercy*, 31.

789. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 19.

790. Braman, *Meaning*, 68.

791. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 48. Emphasis added.

but a simple way to love as Mother Teresa's dictum states: "*Do small things with great love.*"<sup>792</sup> Mother Teresa identifies herself as *being in love with God* with small things, such as a pencil in God's hands or as a chalice. Mother Teresa and the Sisters demonstrate that *being in love with God* as self-appropriation, as in Lonergan's term, is concrete and practical. For example, Mother Teresa expresses her love toward the sick and the suffering in Nirmal Hriday (Home for the Dying) by "go[ing] from bed to bed ... [to] touch the people," while the Sisters serve them.<sup>793</sup> A man who died in Nirmal Hriday said, "I have lived like an animal in the street, but I will die like an angel, loved and cared for."<sup>794</sup> For Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity, the poorest of the poor do not hunger only for food, but also hunger and thirst for love. Through charity as the core of Mother Teresa's mystical way, she proclaims that God's love is for all people. In light of Lonergan's thought on transcendental precepts, religious conversion draws Mother Teresa to genuine responsibility through love. Religious conversion is "conversion to love" in which Mother Teresa is transcending herself.<sup>795</sup> McCarthy highlights that each individual has a "natural capacity for self-transcendence" as a calling of authenticity by being responsible through *being in love with God*.<sup>796</sup> Through religious conversion, Mother Teresa became a concrete model of self-transcendence, who responsibly embraces humanity with love without any condition, qualification, or reservation. In other words, through religious conversion, one can see others as they truly are as human beings.

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792. Conroy, *Mother Teresa's Lessons*, 85. Emphasis added.

793. Mother Teresa, *Call to Mercy*, 31.

794. Mother Teresa, *Call to Mercy*, 41.

795. Haughey, "Three Conversions," 6.

796. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 47.



Thus, Mother Teresa achieves her authenticity in self-transcendence by *being in love with God* through intellectual, moral, and religious conversions, which are integrated into her personal and communal life: as a Loreto sister and as a resident of Calcutta. The conversion “opens the subject up most fully as human beings,” and in Mother Teresa’s case took place in her commitment of radical love for the poorest of the poor.<sup>797</sup> Self-transcendence is possible when “all three [types of conversion] occur within *a single consciousness*, to conceive their relations in terms of sublation.”<sup>798</sup> This affirms that self-transcendence cannot occur without conversion, and self-transcendence as a lifelong process requires subjective presence as consciousness. Moreover, Miller highlights, “Conversion is a positive change in the orientation of *one’s liberty* toward *better possible choices* and *terminal values*. It causes a *radical shift* in one’s fears and desires, satisfactions and values, beliefs and scales of preference. It frees one from inauthenticity for *greater authenticity*.”<sup>799</sup> Mother Teresa chose a radical shift, through the Missionaries of Charity, as fulfilment of her authenticity as a human being.

## Conclusion

To sum up, as I quoted in the introduction of this chapter, Mother Teresa’s dictum demonstrates her authenticity: “*By blood, I am Albanian. By citizenship, I am an Indian. By faith, I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the world. As to my heart, I belong*

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797. Braman, *Meaning*, 71.

798. Lonergan, *Method*, 241. Emphasis added.

799. Miller, *Quest for God*, 149.

*entirely to the Heart of Jesus.*”<sup>800</sup> Her authenticity in self-transcendence shows as a lifelong process through being a subjective presence which is developed in personal and communal contexts of particular times and places. Calcutta was the basic context of her life *experience* for sixty-eight years (1929-1997).

In daily life as a Loreto Sister, Mother Teresa had an *unrestricted desire to know* what was behind the label of Calcutta as “the dark holes of the poor.” By being *attentive*, Mother Teresa improved her capacity and willingness to *understand* Calcutta holistically, which pulled her more closely to the poor on the streets and in the slums. Through her *intelligent* understanding of the poor, Mother Teresa questioned the existence of the Dalit, who are discriminated against socially and religiously, as the outcasts of Hinduism. Their deep suffering caused Mother Teresa to *judge* them as the poorest of the poor, as they are not only physically in poverty, but also thirsty and hungry for love. Meanwhile, as Mother Teresa reflected on their condition, she also contemplated the crucified Jesus who cried out: “I thirst” as a human desire that needs to be satisfied. “I thirst” becomes “the call within a call” to be *reasonable* to satiate Christ, who identifies with the poorest of the poor. At this point, Mother Teresa arrived at *intellectual conversion*, which focuses on the conversion to reality and led her to *being in love with God*.

The next process is *moral conversion*, which involves the conversion of reality to meaning or value. In response to her second call or “the call within a call,” over the next five years, Mother Teresa discovered her *terminal values* and discerned her calling. Those five years of living outside the Loreto convent was how Mother Teresa discovered what was truly good and truly valuable for her own authenticity. She then formulated her *terminal values* in one word: *charity*, which referred to a new way of loving the poorest of the poor, and

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800. Donohue, *Unmasking Mother Teresa's Critics*, 4.

embraced them as a part of the true community of Mother Teresa and the Sisters. In this way, the truly good and truly valuable can be practiced.

Based on the value of *charity*, Mother Teresa converted moral into love, or *religious conversion*. For her, the fulfilment of her religious conversion lead to a *decision* of being in *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* as the way of *being in love with God*. Mother Teresa and the Sisters then transformed the value itself, charity, as the way to love the poorest of the poor without limits, or qualifications, or conditions, or reservations. This is the *responsible* act of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity for humanity.

Thus, the interpretation of the life of Mother Teresa through Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence—intellectual, moral, and religious conversion—shows that the work of conversions is not a fixed order, as Lonergan affirms that the sublative process is fluid: “one is not to infer that intellectual comes first and then moral and finally religious. On the contrary, from a causal viewpoint, one would say that first there is God's gift of his love.”<sup>801</sup> God's love dwelled in Mother Teresa since she converted to the reality of Calcutta. Her eyes of love were opened to the poorest of the poor, revealing the value of humanity and transforming that value into concrete action through the second call.

Finally, conversion is “more than a change of horizon, [conversion] means beginning to belong to a new social group, or at least belonging in a new way.”<sup>802</sup> Mother Teresa's desire of human spirit is fulfilled “in *unrestricted love*,” in which her radical love not only heals the wound, but also elevates the dignity of the poorest of the poor by embracing them as brothers and sisters.<sup>803</sup> However, Mother Teresa and the Sisters' unrestricted love does “not mean perfect love. [It] simply mean[s] a love that goes on and on and on ... [unrestricted

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801. Lonergan, *Method*, 243.

802. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 85.

803. Miller, *Quest for God*, 69. Emphasis added.

love] is never perfect in this life: authenticity is never fully achieved.”<sup>804</sup> In other words, *being in love with God* is an infinite dynamic of life, and it never ends as a lifelong process. *Being in love with God* is not a temporary state of being, but a lifelong journey.

In light of Christian mysticism, the *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* as the way of *being in love with God* leads Mother Teresa and Bernard Lonergan to meet on “the royal road to God [which] is the road of love” and the way to self-transcendence.<sup>805</sup> Johnston highlights that “love leads to the most sublime wisdom, the wisdom of the mystic.”<sup>806</sup> Additionally, Johnston affirms that Lonergan’s *being in love with God* is

mystical love ... [which is] the peak-point of that thrust towards self-transcendence and authenticity that is rooted in the minds and hearts of all human beings. There is nothing elitist about it. It is not a gift offered to Christians alone. It is not offered to religious people alone. *It is offered to all men and women* who would be fully human.<sup>807</sup>

Having mystical love is available for all human beings beyond identities and mystical love is blended in humanity itself. This becomes the basic foundation of self-transcendence as a mystical way in ordinary life. Lonergan offers a mystical way based on an integration of intentional consciousness precepts, which are rooted in theological anthropology, and love, which is rooted in mystical wisdom. Based on this perspective, Mother Teresa is a *mystic* who lives in the midst of society, practicing radical love through *charity* for the transformation of humanity as the core of her spirituality and her capacity for self-transcendence. Mother Teresa’s life journey affirms that mysticism is about social

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804. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 65.

805. Johnston, *Mystical Theology*, 82.

806. Johnston, *Mystical Theology*, 84.

807. Johnston, *Mystical Theology*, 84. Emphasis added.

engagement. Thus, mystical love is not only offered to Mother Teresa, female and Catholic, but also Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, male and *Kejawen*, Javanese mysticism.

“Just think for a moment, you and I have been called by our name, because He loved us. Because you and I are somebody special to Him—to be *His Heart to love Him* in the poor, *His Hands to serve Him* in the poorest of the poor ... beginning with those around us, and even in our own families.”<sup>808</sup>  
- Mother Teresa

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808. Mother Teresa, *Call to Mercy*, 332.

## CHAPTER 5

### The Mystical Way of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan's Notion of

#### Self-Transcendence

##### Introduction

*“Sarehne kawruh jiwa punika kawruh raos, mila sinau kawruh jiwa punika sinau raosipun piyambak. Raosipun piyambak punika awakipun piyambak.*

*Mila meruhi raosipun piyambak punika meruhi awakipun piyambak.*

(Because *kawruh jiwa* is *kawruh raos*, learning *kawruh jiwa* is learning one's own *raos*. One's own *raos* is the self itself. Knowing one's own *raos* is knowing oneself.)”<sup>809</sup>

- Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

In this chapter, I will discuss the intersection between the mystical way of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence. In the first part, I will discuss Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, who requested the renunciation of his title as a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta in the midst of feudalism and colonialism. Due to disappointing events in his own life, he struggled deeply to find his true self in the desire to move beyond “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being) in the context of human relationships based on a hierarchical status. As a prince, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, along with his noble family, always received honor from *abdi* (servants); in contrast, the noble family was not required to respect the servants, who had a lower status. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, his princely title did not represent his true self as the title created barriers in relationships, even within his own family. For example, his maternal grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI, was not allowed to be buried in the royal family cemetery because he had a low status. The desire to move beyond “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” enlightened Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

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809. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, ed. Ki Grangsang Suryomentaram (Jakarta: CV. Haji MasAgung, 1989), 1.

about the human tendency to be egoistic in order to achieve *semat* (wealth), *drajat* (public recognition), and *kramat* (power). Because egoism (*kramadangsa*) becomes attached to individuals, individuals must *natajangsa* (manage the ego) through *raos* (intuitive inner feeling) to become *manungsa tanpa ciri* (a pure being).

Based on his empirical experiences, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram developed *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) within *raos* as the core. As I quoted above, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram stressed that *Kawruh Jiwa* is an interiority process of the self through *raos*, rather than a doctrinal process. In other words, *Kawruh Jiwa* is a method or guideline in which each individual has to discover his or her own *raos*. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram found the fulfilment of his desire by being *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power), which is the fruit of *natajangsa*. *Manungsa tanpa ciri* is not only a personal fulfilment, but also a communal transformation which leads to *Windu Kencana*, the presence of true happiness and tranquility in society.

In the second part, I will examine the correlation between the mystical journey of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence, as discussed in Chapter 3. Just as I analyzed Mother Teresa and Lonergan in Chapter 4, I will likewise focus on Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan's notion of conversion process in regard to intellectual conversion, moral conversion, and religious conversion. Lonergan's notion of conversion is the core of an ongoing process of self-transcendence based on interiority as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram places great emphasis on *raos* (intuitive inner feeling). The conversion process works through Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's model of *Kawruh Jiwa*, which in turn led to his authenticity: *manungsa tanpa ciri*.

## Time and Place: The Context of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

In the previous chapter, I discussed the context of time and place of Mother Teresa. Likewise, in this chapter I will trace the context of time and place of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, who refused his title as a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta and chose to live as an ordinary person outside the *kraton*, or palace. To study Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in light of spirituality, the *kraton* must become an authentic place, following David Perrin's term, as he says, "In authentic place, with its reminders of the identity of any particular community which includes where it has come from, and where it is going, encounter with God through the mediation of place can be greatly enriched."<sup>810</sup> This affirms that place is not only a physical location, but is also attached to social, political, and cultural contexts. The contexts of feudalism, colonialism, and Javanese culture are of great importance in the life of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Each of these has an effect on the time and place in which "the space of human interaction in all its diversity both at the communal and interpersonal level" shaped Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's spirituality.<sup>811</sup> Robert S. Ellwood points out,

[M]ysticism is part of society, that the mystic does not exist in an empyrean abstracted from society, that instead his or her experiences have a direct or indirect social impact, and also that those inner experiences ... may in part derive from the feelings of oneness engendered from living in society.<sup>812</sup>

Ellwood's perspective above affirms that *Kawruh Jiwa*, as the mystical way of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, was the call that led to his concern, resistance, and transformation for a social life. Based on his own empirical life, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram invented *Kawruh Jiwa* as a mystical way, rooted in the Javanese culture of harmony.

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810. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 69.

811. Perrin, *Studying Christian Spirituality*, 69.

812. Robert S. Ellwood, *Mysticism and Religion* (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 1999), 25.



### ***Bendara Raden Mas (B.R.M) Kudiarmaji***

B.R.M. Kudiarmaji, later known as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, was born on May 20, 1892, in Kraton Yogyakarta. He was the 55<sup>th</sup> of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII's 79 children. His father had three wives as *permaisuri*, or primary wives, and eighteen *garwa ampeyan*, or secondary wives. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's mother was B.R.A. Retnomadoyo, a secondary wife and the daughter of Patih Danurejo VI, who was the *patih*, or prime minister.<sup>813</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram completed his primary education at the *Srimenganti* Palace School. He also learned English and Arabic in addition to his primary languages of Indonesian and Javanese. He also was required to learn Dutch in preparation to becoming a *Klein Ambternaar* (Dutch: a junior civil servant) at "the Yogyakarta Residence."<sup>814</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram studied *wayang wong* (literally "human *wayang*"), a type of classical Javanese dance. The emphasis of *wayang wong* is not only on the body's movements but also on the role of character. The *wayang wong* dance and its characteristics became a model of transmitting Javanese culture and philosophy through performance art.

At the age of eighteen, B.R.M. Kudiarmaji was crowned and received the new title and name of Bendara Pangeran Harya (B.P.H.) Suryomentaram. Being crowned prince at the early age of eighteen was uncommon, as most men were in their thirties and forties before they were crowned. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was crowned because "he had the ability to

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813. *Patih* means the prime minister of a Javanese state in the *kraton* system in that era. Patih Danurejo VI's residence eventually became the current Yogyakarta Governor's Office, called the *Kepatihan*.

814. Marcel Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince and Philosopher (1892-1962)," *Archipel* 57 (1993): 50.

*ngudari reribet*, or problem solving.”<sup>815</sup> He was a beloved son, as well as a beloved grandson of his maternal grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI, because “[Ki Ageng Suryomentaram] was a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta,” and Patih Danurejo VI spoiled Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, more than his other grandchildren.<sup>816</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was “the first generation who received modern education, which means the Dutch education.”<sup>817</sup> He also received a great deal of property from his father, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII, and his maternal grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI.

Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII was the king of Kraton Yogyakarta from 1877 to 1921. During that period, Yogyakarta was a prosperous city. After “a huge earthquake ruined Yogyakarta,” Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII rebuilt the city and restored the economics of Yogyakarta.<sup>818</sup> Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII built seventeen sugar and vanilla factories in the Yogyakarta territory, and he was called “*Sultan Sugih*,” or the rich Sultan.<sup>819</sup> His reign was a period of transition into a more modern Yogyakarta. Schools were established, from primary to high school, urban planning was introduced in the Kotabaru, Gandekan, and Wirobrajan areas, and “the autonomous village system” begun.<sup>820</sup> In 1918, *Kridha Beksa Wirama*, a Javanese musical and artistic community, was established. The community had widespread impact on the schools where “male and female students and children learned [the

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815. Ryan Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta Untuk Dunia: Riwayat dan Jalan Penemuan Ilmu Kawruh Jiwa,” in *Handbook Ilmu Kawruh Jiwa: Suryomentaram, Riwayat, dan Jalan Menuju Bahagia*, ed. Sapta Widi Wusana (Yogyakarta: Dinas Kebudayaan Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2015), 9.

816. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 10.

817. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 11.

818. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 3.

819. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 3.

820. G. Moedjanto, *Kasultanan Yogyakarta & Kadipaten Pakualaman: Tinjauan Historis Dua Praja Kejawen Antara 1755-1992* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1994), 21.

sacred] dances of *bedhaya*, *srimpi*, [and] *beksan lawung*, [and the music] *gamelan*.”<sup>821</sup> These sacred dances no longer belonged only to the *kraton*, but were offered to society. In fact, Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII’s openness to modernization was demonstrated when he allowed “the princes and princesses to study abroad in the Netherlands.”<sup>822</sup> Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII was a reformer in many areas of life.

### ***Ki Ageng Suryomentaram***

After B.R.M. Kudiarmaji was crowned prince and received his new title and name, Bendara Pangeran Harya (B.P.H.) Suryomentaram, he received more respect from others in his family, the *kraton*’s *abdi dalem* (servants), and society. The daily feudalistic life in the *kraton* made Ki Ageng Suryomentaram raise a critical reflection on “Who am I” as the true self, because his relationships were based on status instead of his dignity as a human. The feudalism of Kraton Yogyakarta bothered Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in his daily life. As a prince, his relationship with the servants was hierarchical between *ndoro* (master) and *abdi* (servant). The relationship of *ndoro-abdi* (master-servant) emphasizes the *abdi*’s role in satisfying the master, as an unsatisfied master may become angry with the servant, even if the servant is older than the master. This type of relationship made Ki Ageng Suryomentaram uncomfortable with his status as a prince. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, feudalism reduced humanity, as he pointed out in his statement “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being). While contemplating his thoughts, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram discussed his discontentment with his cousin, Prawirowiworo.

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821. Purwadi, *Sejarah Raja-Raja Jawa: Sejarah Kehidupan Kraton and Perkembangannya di Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Media Abadi, 2014), 476.

822. Moedjanto, *Kasultanan Yogyakarta*, 22.

As part of his discernment, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, along with Prawirowiworo, went to “meditate in various places believed to be propitious, [such as] the Goa Langse or Goa Cerme caves, the beach at Parangtritis, and certain *kramat* [sacred] tombs ... At other times they went to talk to spiritual leaders and were keen to learn about things of a religious or mystical nature.”<sup>823</sup> Besides Prawirowiworo, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram had two half-brothers and several friends with whom he discussed *kebatinan* (Javanese mysticism) and political issues: G.P.H. Notoprojo and B.P.H. Suryadiningrat, the 31<sup>st</sup> son and the 42<sup>nd</sup> son of Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII, respectively.<sup>824</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram also studied “religions, humanity, and Muhammadiyah’s teaching with K.H. Ahmad Dahlan,” the founder of Muhammadiyah Indonesia, and with “young Islamic clergies at Pondok Krapyak,” a community in Yogyakarta which is affiliated with Nahdatul Ulama (NU).<sup>825</sup> Ryan Sugiarto notes that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram “studied Christianity and theosophy” as well.<sup>826</sup> These various religious traditions enriched Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in his religiosity as a young man with a deep curiosity for the meaning of life.

In his quest for true self and life’s meaning, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram asked Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII to allow him “to make a pilgrimage to Mecca,” but the Sultan refused his request.<sup>827</sup> According to Mark R. Woodward, it seems that the refusal was because Sultan Hamengkubuwono and the nobility held to Javanese Islam, which emphasizes “mystical

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823. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 51.

824. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 6.

825. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 13.

826. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 15. See Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Buku “Langgar” 1920-1928: Bangkokan Kawruh Jiwa*.

827. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 51.

practice and experience, ritual, and the veneration of saints.”<sup>828</sup> In other words, the Sultan and the nobility did not concern themselves with normative piety such as a pilgrimage because there is an intersection between *kejawen*, Javanese mysticism, which is influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, and Islam, particularly Sufism. Woodward highlights that for many Sufi, “the true *Ka’bah* is not the stone structure located at Mecca but the house of Allah found in the human heart.”<sup>829</sup> This shows a metaphorical emphasis over an emphasis on normative piety.

Being uncomfortable with life as a prince, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram requested that his father allow him to renounce his title. Meanwhile, in the wider political context, Jonquière, the Resident to the Governor General, forced Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII to declare which of his sons would be his heir as the next step in the process of succession. Additionally, the Dutch Governor believed that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram “was an incarnation of Diponegoro,” a Javanese prince and son of Sultan Hamengkubuwono III.<sup>830</sup> Diponegoro declined the succession to the title of crown prince and instead chose to live in the midst of society to create guerrilla strategy in order to oppose the Dutch colonial state. This culminated in the Java War or Diponegoro War of 1825-1830.<sup>831</sup> This historical background was the reason the Dutch Governor feared that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram would also leave Kraton Yogyakarta and oppose the Dutch colonial state; the Dutch Governor

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828. Mark R. Woodward, *Islam in Java: Normative and Mysticism in the Sultanate of Yogyakarta* (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 1989), 149.

829. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 189. Woodward gives an example of the Turkish mystic, Yunus Emre who states: “When you seek God, seek Him in your heart—He is not in Jerusalem, not in Mecca, not in the *hajj*.”

830. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 14.

831. The Diponegoro War is noted as being the most costly war during the Dutch colonial era. For an overview of Diponegoro, see Van Der Kroef, Justus M. “Prince Diponegoro: Progenitor of Indonesian Nationalism.” *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 8 (1949): 424-50. doi: 10.2307/2049542.

wanted Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII to clarify the order of succession.<sup>832</sup> Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII chose another son as his heir, but he also rejected Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's request to renounce his title. In his disappointment, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram "*minggat* (ran away), and went to live in Cilacap."<sup>833</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram changed his name to *Natadangsa* (to manage the ego). The prince's entourage became worried that because Ki Ageng Suryomentaram believed "material possessions to be an obstacle to happiness, he began to give away his personal property."<sup>834</sup> On his journey to find his true self, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram gave all his wealth to others; for example, he gave his car to his driver and his horse to the stableman. In Kroya Village, Cilacap, he worked as a digger of wells and a peddler of *batik*, a wax-resist dyed textile. In daily life, he wore "the black shorts and leather belt worn by the peasants; he went about barefooted, of course, but around his neck he wore a length of batik cloth dyed with the *parang barong* motif, which was still worn only by the sovereign."<sup>835</sup> People did not realize that *Natadangsa* was Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta. Sultan Hamengku Buwono VII eventually invited Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to come back to the palace, and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram returned home.

After he returned to his life as a prince, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram experienced three disappointments that led him to search deeper about being or the self. Ki Ageng

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832. Both Diponegoro (a son of Sultan Hamengkubuwono III) and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram (a son of Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII) were princes of Kraton Yogyakarta who opposed colonialism and feudalism, but they did so different ways. Diponegoro took up the dagger within guerrilla strategy, while Ki Ageng Suryomentaram took up *raos* within *Kawruh Jiwa* as a "strategy" of life.

833. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos: Saintifikasi Kawruh Jiwa Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ifada, 2015), 28.

834. Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince," 51.

835. Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince," 52.

Suryomentaram's first disappointment was the divorce of his parents, when his mother, B.R.A. Retnomandoyo, was forced to live outside the palace. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram collected his mother and "brought her to live with his family."<sup>836</sup> Djoko Dwiyanto notes that the divorce was due to "political reason[s]" and was followed by Patih Danurejo VI stepping down from his position in *Kepatihan*.<sup>837</sup>

The second disappointment occurred when Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's grandfather died. He asked to his father that "his grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI, should be buried beside his grandmother" in the royal cemetery of Kraton Yogyakarta in Imogiri.<sup>838</sup> Unfortunately, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's father rejected his request and said, "*Embahira iku dharah cilik. Kang kena sumare ing Imagiri iku mung panjenenganne Nata, sanajan wayah Nata ora kena sumare ing sakjroning pasareayan Imogiri.*" (Your grandfather had low status. Only those who were government officers can be buried in the cemetery. Even though your grandfather was an officer, he is not allowed to be buried in Imogiri.)<sup>839</sup> Patih Danurejo VI was then "buried in Kanggotan."<sup>840</sup>

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's third disappointment came when his wife, R.A. Surtiadiwati, "passed away after giving birth."<sup>841</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram had married R.A. Surtiadiwati in 1915, when he was 23 years old.

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836. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta, 13.

837. Djoko Dwiyanto, *Kraton Yogyakarta: Sejarah, Nasionalisme, & Teladan Perjuangan* (Yogyakarta: Paradigma Indonesia, 2010), 401.

838. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 28.

839. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 6, ed. Ki Grangsang Suryomentaram (Jakarta: Panitia Kawruh Jiwa Jakarta, 2011), 186.

840. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta," 12. When Ki Ageng Suryomentaram died in March 18, 1962, at age 70, he was also buried in Kanggotan, the same cemetery complex as his grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI.

841. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta," 13.

Reflecting on his empirical life journey, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram learned that “*raosing gesang tiyang sajabat punika sami mawon*” (people around the world have the same *raos*).<sup>842</sup> All people have the same *raos* of happiness and sadness. *Raos* is not dependent on the social or economic status of individuals, such as being a prince or a farmer, or being rich or poor. A rich person is not always happy and a poor person is not always sad; people will experience both happiness and sadness in their lives, regardless of their status. Sugiarto explains that hermeneutically, *raos* is a result of the senses; thus, *raos* is “an intertwining of cognition (*nalar*) and inner feeling of solitude (*budi wening*).”<sup>843</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram once proposed a contemplative statement: “*Suryomentaram iki yen dijupuk semat—drajat—lan kramate, sing isih kari apa? Sing isih yo mung uwong thok*” (What is left if wealth (*semat*), public recognition (*drajat*), and power (*kramat*) are taken from Suryomentaram? What is left is the self only.)<sup>844</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram learned from his disappointments that he must rely on the inward self (*aku*) as the source of life, rather than outward comforts which are rooted in desire (*karep*). Because of their desire, most people are drawn to pursue *semat*, *drajat*, and *kramat* as prestigious treasures to identify themselves. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram realized that *semat*, *drajat*, and *kramat* are finite and can be lost, and only the self is infinite. Thus, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram opposed pursuing *semat*, *drajat*, and *kramat*, and instead proposed living in the principle of 6 *sa* (the six “sa”): “*sakepenake, sabutuhe, saperlune, sacukupe, samestine, [lan] sabenere*” (a person should have an easy manner, meet the needs, be self-sufficient, be content with circumstances, practice

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842. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 14.

843. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 16. See the footnote 30 on page 15; Sugiarto refers to some scholars about the meaning of *raos*. Sugiarto refers to Darmanto Jatman’s thought that *raos*, in Javanese context, means more than feeling, emotion, sentimentality, lust, mood, or sensation. For Javanese, *raos* is life’s taste, intuitive inner feeling, human character, divine nature, and human heart.

844. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 36, 94.



moderation and fairness, and remain in the appropriate location and role).<sup>845</sup> In short, the six “sa” are what lead to true happiness: freedom and tranquility.

In 1921, after forty-four years of leadership, Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII, of his own free will, stepped down from his position as sultan and the new ruler, Sultan Hamengkubuwono VIII, was enthroned. This was an unusual decision, as the succession of the throne happens automatically after the death of the reigning sultan. The sultan’s act of abdication was called *lengser keprabon madeg pandhita*, which means stepping down from the throne and preparing for the next leader. The abdication of Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII was *legowo*, which means “sincerity” as a Javanese virtue. It seems that Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII was inspired by the Mahabharata epic, in which Prabu Kresna Dwipayana, as the king of Hastinapura, gave his throne to his son, Pandu. Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII’s way of *lengser keprabon* was a wise decision due to potential conflict among his children regarding the issue of succession.<sup>846</sup> The succession of the throne from Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII to Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono VIII took place on February 8, 1921.<sup>847</sup> After Sultan Hamengkubuwono VIII’s enthronement, Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII left the *kraton* and lived in the Javanese architectural building, *pendopo Bale Kambang*, in the small resort of *Pesanggrahan Ngambarrukma*, until he died on December 30, 1921.<sup>848</sup> He was buried at the royal cemetery of Kraton Yogyakarta in Imogiri, Bantul.

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845. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 22. See also, Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 57.

846. Dwiyanto, *Kraton Yogyakarta*, 362-6.

847. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 19.

848. Dwiyanto, *Kraton Yogyakarta*, 347.

The succession of a new sultan prompted Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to again request the renunciation of his title of prince. Sultan Hamengkubuwono VIII approved Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's request, and after renouncing his title, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram left Yogyakarta to live in Beringin Village, Salatiga, Central Java, as a "farmer" with his family.<sup>849</sup> Even though he was no longer a prince, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was eligible to receive an allowance from the *kraton*, but he refused it. When Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII died in December 1921, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram came to the funeral procession at the royal cemetery. On that day, the princes and the *abdi dalem*, the *kraton*'s servants, wore their traditional clothes, while Ki Ageng Suryomentaram wore a very different outfit: "*Begelan* headband, a white suit patched with old blue fabric, holding a Chinese umbrella."<sup>850</sup> Additionally, on the way home from the funeral, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram took a rest and bought *nasi pecel yang dipincuk dengan daun pisang and cao*, a Javanese salad and a grass jelly, then sat on the ground to eat.<sup>851</sup> This shows how Ki Ageng Suryomentaram identified himself as a common person in society, even though his self-identification was odd to the people who met him. This historical overview plays an important role in understanding Ki Ageng Suryomentaram on his path to finding self-authenticity.

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849. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta," 20.

850. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta," 19.

851. Sugiarto, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta," 19.

***What is Kejawen, Javanese Mysticism?***

Javanese mysticism, *kejawen*, is an intersection of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, especially Sufism. The intersection developed during the historical periods when the three religions came to Java and adapted to its culture. Historically, the Javanese not only syncretized but also contextualized Hinduism and Buddhism, which came to Indonesia in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. As Simuh highlights, “Hinduism and Buddhism in their origin countries, they conflicted each other, but in Java, they were united in the concept of Siva-Buddha.”<sup>852</sup> Endraswara adds that in the ancient Mataram Dynasty during the 7<sup>th</sup> century, “Siva-Buddha became the highest essence of Almighty.”<sup>853</sup> This unity occurred because the character of Javanese culture is “acceptance of religions with the understanding that all religion is good and true; of most importance is the religious experience that leads to the interest and growth of society.”<sup>854</sup> For the Javanese, *agama* (religion) is “*ageming aji* which means a ‘cloth of something more valuable [or] spirituality.’ Spirituality, for the Javanese, is more important than the [concept of] nobility which clothes or forms religions.”<sup>855</sup> This relates to the essential aspect of *batin* (the inner self), which impacts harmonious life. For the Javanese, only through *batin* is an individual able to perceive correctly both reality and the essence of

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852. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa: Transformasi Tasawuf Islam ke Mistik Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya, 1995), 117.

853. Suwardi Endraswara, *Agama Jawa: Ajaran, Amalan, dan Asal-usul Kejawen* (Yogyakarta: Narasi-Lembu Jawa, 2015), 22.

854. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa*, 117.

855. Abdurrahman El-‘Ashiy, *Makrifat Jawa untuk Semua: Menjelajah Ruang Rasa dan Mengembangkan Kecerdasan Batin Bersama Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2011), 133.

reality in order to find true reality, which leads to a harmonious cosmological life. The inner self's emphasis fits well with Sufism, which came to Indonesia in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Indonesian Sufic or *tasawwuf* writings, based on Al-Ghazali and Ibn Arabi's thoughts, were developed in Aceh, Sumatera, and Java.<sup>856</sup> Koentjoroningrat, as Simuh quoted, affirms that "mystical thoughts were warmly accepted in Java because the mystical elements of Hindu-Buddhism were already established before Islam came to Java."<sup>857</sup> For example, *unio mystica* is one type of Javanese mysticism, and is also called *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being with God). It was first influenced by the unification of *Atman* and *Brahman* in Hinduism, and later by the concept of *insan kamil* (the perfect human) in Sufism. Not only *Walisongo* (the nine messengers of Islam), but Sultan Agung, the third Mataram sultan in Central Java who reigned 1613-1645, also took an important role in the Islamization of Javanese culture through Sufism. Later, in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, Kraton Mataram separated into Kraton Surakarta and Kraton Yogyakarta, and both of them became centers of *kejawen*, roles which they continue to hold to this day. Sufism influenced Javanese literature from the 17<sup>th</sup> through early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, such as *Centhini*, *Wedhatama*, *Wulangreh*, etc. The content of the literature is *kejawen*, which teaches wisdom vital to Javanese culture. Harun Hadiwijono highlights that *kejawen* is "an anthropological system."<sup>858</sup> Hadiwijono is in line with Niels Mulder, who affirms that *kejawen* is "a particular system of principles for conduct of life. As a system of thought, [*kejawen*] is singularly elaborate, containing a cosmology, a mythology, a set of essentially

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856. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa*, 50-8.

857. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa*, 51.

858. Harun Hadiwijono, *Kebatinan dan Injil* (Jakarta: BPK. Gunung Mulia, 1983), 9.

mystical conceptions, and suchlike.”<sup>859</sup> In other words, Javanese mysticism emphasizes cosmological harmony in which the self takes on an important role in building holistic and harmonious relationships. Endraswara highlights that *kejawen* is founded on the principle “measure yourself before measuring others.”<sup>860</sup> As Ki Ageng Suryomentaram highlights “*Kawruh Jiwa puniko dede agami*” (*Kawruh Jiwa* is not a religion).<sup>861</sup> Thus, *kejawen* is neither a religion nor a culture, but a mystical way of harmonious life that functions personally and communally. *Kejawen* is *paugeran* (a principle) of the Javanese way of life with mysticism as its core.<sup>862</sup> This *paugeran* emphasizes keeping balance between *lahir* (the internal) and *batin* (the external) in one’s personal and communal life. Moreover, the aspects of *lahir* and *batin* in the self are intertwined. *Kejawen* concerns absolute reliance on *Sang Pemberi Hidup* (the Giver of Life) in the journey of life, but one’s faithfulness to the Giver of Life does not cause one’s personal life to be separate from societal life. Rather, one’s life creates *rukun* (harmonious unity) with others. In other words, *kejawen* stresses unity and harmony both vertically and horizontally, with God and with others. This value of *kejawen* influenced Ki Ageng Suryomentaram who pointed to *raos* as the core of *Kawruh Jiwa*.

### ***Javanese Mysticism and the Kraton Yogyakarta***

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was influenced by *kejawen* through the royal family. As Woodward highlights, “at the level of the state the mystical *isi* [essence] is formed by the

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859. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2005), 16.

860. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 159.

861. Ki Admosutidjo, “Gandulan Wilujengan Kangge Konco-Konco Sinau Kawruh Jiwa” (paper presented at Wilujengan 40 dinten sedanipun Ki Ageng Suryomentaram by Panitya Kawruh Jiwa, Yogyakarta, April 26, 1962).

862. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 159.

sultan and his court, who, as saints, are not required to conform to the behavior norms of the *sharī'ah*.”<sup>863</sup> In the political context, “the sultan is the mystical *isi* [essence] of the state and the populace, the normative *wadah* [container].”<sup>864</sup> Simuh adds that the mystical aspect attached to the sultan expresses a theocratic system in which “the hallowed king [sultan] is bearer of the divine essence in the world.”<sup>865</sup> This is rooted in the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* epics and the concept of “*raja binathara* [or] *raja titising dewa*” (a king is a descendent of god).<sup>866</sup> The sultan has the ability “to attain union with Allah [who] gives him unique, unqualified knowledge of divine will, establishing his religious as well as secular authority.”<sup>867</sup> The sultan’s ability causes him to have *sabda pandita ratu* (words of a wise king), which means a king must hold true to his statements in speech, attitude, and actions.

Additionally, Woodward stresses that “the sultan and the nobles need be concerned only with mysticism and the veneration of saints [*walisongo*, or the nine Islamic messengers]. Yogyakarta sultans rarely attend Friday services at the state mosque.”<sup>868</sup> This affirms that the sultans of Yogyakarta generally prioritize Javanese mysticism over the normative piety of Islam. In line with Woodward, Mulder highlights that in *kejawen*:

“God” is in the heart, and life should be a continuous prayer to the Almighty. They do not see why one should pray to God five times a day, or in a church, or why such prayers must be blared from loudspeakers on the tops of mosques. In *kejawen* thinking, God is not an unapproachable, distant judge, on the contrary, “God” is closer to [human] than anything else.<sup>869</sup>

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863. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 72.

864. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 150.

865. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa*, 117.

866. Simuh, *Sufisme Jawa*, 117. The second italics added.

867. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 157.

868. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 150.

869. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 29.

Thus, controversy between the normative piety or *sharī'ah* of Islam and the mystical practice of *kejawen* is a crucial part of the history of Javanese mysticism and Islam. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Syekh Siti Jenar, a “radical” of Javanese Sufism, emphasized the mystical union with God, or *ma'rifat* (mystical insight), rather than *sharī'ah* (Islamic law). Muhammad Sholikhin explains that even though there was a contradiction between Syekh Siti Jenar and *Walisongo* (the nine Islamic messengers), Sunan Kalijaga, one of the *Walisongo*, was in alignment with Syekh Siti Jenar rather than the other eight members: Sunan Giri, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Bonang, and others.<sup>870</sup> In other words, Sunan Kalijaga was concerned with both *kejawen* and *sharī'ah*, granting legitimacy to Javanese mysticism as well as normative Islam.

In his study of Syekh Siti Jenar, who emphasized *unio mystica* of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, Sholikhin argues that Sufism/*tasawwuf* and Javanese mysticism/*kejawen* are “a circle which draws human beings to be immersed in the genuine life through the arena of this world and not to escape from it ... *tasawwuf* and [Javanese] mysticism have a clear intersection. Both of them lead to the process of being close to Allah.”<sup>871</sup> In line with Sholikhin, Martin Lings describes that the way of Sufis is “the inward deepening or ebbing of the finite self in the direction of its Divine Principle.”<sup>872</sup> There is no inferior or superior in the relationship between a human and God in *unio mystica* of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*. *Manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is not only a personal way of being a mystic, but is also “an

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870. Muhammad Sholikhin, *Manunggaling Kawula-Gusti: Filsafat Kemanunggalan Syekh Siti Jenar* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2011), 353.

871. Sholikhin, *Manunggaling Kawula-Gusti*, 187. Muhammad Sholikhin wrote a series on Syekh Siti Jenar: *Ajaran Ma'rifat Syekh Siti Jenar*, *Sufism Syekh Siti Jenar*, and *Manunggaling Kawula-Gusti* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2011).

872. Martin Lings, *What is Sufism?* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 2010), 29.

essential role in the Yogyakarta theory of kingship.”<sup>873</sup> However, the manifestation of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* in the Yogyakarta kingship becomes hierarchical rather than egalitarian. Woodward explains that “hierarchical relationships are transitive, the ideal society is one in which all *kawula* (subjects) are governed by the will of the sultan, who is subject to Allah alone. As the sultan is the viceregent [*sic*] of Allah and capable of attaining mystical union, every subject is linked, by virtue of the fact that he is a *kawula*, directly to Allah.”<sup>874</sup> In other words, in the hierarchical relationship between *ndoro* (master) as superior and *abdi dalem* (servant) as inferior, there is an overemphasis on who is superior in status. Indeed, the role of kingship in Kraton Yogyakarta is paternalistic; the sultan is responsible for prosperity and justice in social and communal life, and the sultan is also the intermediary between God and society at large. This is especially evident in the recurring sultanic name of Hamengkubuwono, which is comprised of two words: *hamengku* (on the lap) and *buwono* (universe). This name means a sultan has the responsibility of taking care of the world, as the universe has been laid in his lap. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s *Kawruh Jiwa* reforms the role of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* in personal and communal daily life, promoting the role of kinship alongside the role of kingship. Through *Kawruh Jiwa*, individuals within a hierarchy can use their own *raos* to recognize the *raos* of other people; while the hierarchy of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* has remained, there is a stronger sense of kinship within relationships, due to *raos* and *Kawruh Jiwa*.

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873. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 179.

874. Woodward, *Islam in Java*, 182.



### *Three essences of Javanese Mysticism and Kawruh Jiwa*

First of all, I would like to clarify that I distinguish between *kejawen*, *Kawruh Jiwa*, and *kebatinan*. *Kejawen* is broader than *Kawruh Jiwa* and *kebatinan* because *kejawen* is the Javanese mystical worldview, which becomes the insight of both *Kawruh Jiwa* and *kebatinan*. Both *Kawruh Jiwa* and *kebatinan* emphasize the inner *batin* or *raos* (intuitive inner feeling), but *Kawruh Jiwa* and *kebatinan* are different in practice. *Kawruh Jiwa* emphasizes “phenomenological analysis” and “the absence of meditation” as important aspects of mystical teaching.<sup>875</sup> Clifford Geertz categorizes *Kawruh Jiwa* as one of the mystical sects of *kebatinan*,<sup>876</sup> while Marcel Bonneff argues that since 1953, *Kawruh Jiwa* “has not been listed among the *aliran kebatinan* of Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta.”<sup>877</sup> *Kawruh Jiwa* is not a member of the *Badan Kongres Kebatinan Indonesia* (BKKI, or Congress of Indonesian Mystics). I described the opposition to *kebatinan* while giving a historical overview of *kebatinan* in the social and political context of Indonesia in Chapter 1. One particular controversy is the correlation between *kebatinan*, as a Javanese mysticism, and the practice of *klenik* (a black magical rite). Ki Ageng Suryomentaram strongly emphasized that *Kawruh Jiwa* does not believe in superstition. He argued that there was no correlation between the eruption of Mount Merapi and the ghost princess Ratu Roro Kidul who lives in her palace on the seabed of the southern ocean of Yogyakarta.<sup>878</sup> Ki Ageng Suyomentaram even criticized some ascetic practices, such as *kungkum* (meditation in the water), fasting, sleep deprivation, etc., because he considered such practices illogical and superstitious.<sup>879</sup>

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875. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 63.

876. Geertz, *Religion of Java*, 339-52.

877. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 64.

878. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 26.

879. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 27.

For the Javanese, *kejawen* is not only *ilmu* (knowledge), which emphasizes cognition, but also *ngelmu*, which is the intertwining of knowledge and intuition in the whole individual existence. In other words, Javanese mysticism exists not due to theory or discourse, but due to practice based on “a clear and transparent reasoning.”<sup>880</sup> Thus, *raos* (intuitive inner feeling) plays an important role in leading an individual to apply the Javanese wisdom of *Serat Wedhatama*: “*ngelmu iku kelakone kanthi laku*” (knowledge becomes real when it is applied). Mulder affirms that “*kejawen* is not a religious category, but refers to an ethic and a style of life.”<sup>881</sup> Javanese mysticism is about a practical and holistic life. Endraswara, in his book *Mistik Kejawen*, explains that the Javanese mystical concepts, which represent the Javanese philosophy of life are: *sangkan paraning dumadi* (from origin to destiny), *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being with God), and *memayu hayuning bawana* (to adorn the world).<sup>882</sup> These three philosophies are intertwined with each other, and therefore *raos* (intuitive inner feeling) becomes the core of the self.

#### *Sangkan Paraning Dumadi*

*Sangkan paraning dumadi* (from origin to destiny) is a Javanese perspective that life is limited. The common proverb of life limitation is “*urip kuwi mung mampir ngombe*” (life seems like a pause to have a drink). This leads Javanese to the “‘cult of life.’ It is the realization of the ultimate principle, of Life within the self. If that is accomplished, one ‘has returned home.’ There is thus little cause for wonder that the Javanist perspective downgrades expectations about the afterlife. Life must be accomplished in the here-and-now, it is a task to

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880. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen: Sinkretisme, Simbolisme, and Sufisme dalam Budaya Spiritual Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2014), 33.

881. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 17.

882. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 43-53.

be fulfilled.”<sup>883</sup> *Sangkan paraning dumadi* is about “being” in the midst of life as “home” for human beings by seeking meaning as the accomplishment of their lives. The self plays an important role in the accomplishment process in the world, rather than in heaven as a place of afterlife. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes that an individual must learn from his or her life experience “to contrast moments of joy with moments of sorrow, to sharpen one’s *rasa*. It is a matter of time and practice (*latihan*).”<sup>884</sup> In the Javanese philosophy of life, this practice is called *pangawikan pribadi* (personal discernment), and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram places it as one of the mystical ways of *Kawruh Jiwa*. At this point, some scholars described Ki Ageng Suryomentaram as Socrates van Java<sup>885</sup> and, based on his background as a prince, he is similar to the Buddha, but his involvement in the midst of society is similar to Mahatma Gandhi.<sup>886</sup> For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, individuals in *sangkan paraning dumadi* are always tempted by egoism as “the place of *karep* (desires)”<sup>887</sup> such as wealth, honor, power, group identity, ethnicity, and so on.<sup>888</sup> All of these desires need to be discerned by an individual in order to find his or her true self. The true self is important in *sangkan paraning dumadi*, both personally and communally, because it leads to harmonious living.

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883. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 37.

884. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 57. The first emphasis added.

885. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 50. The term “van” is used here because Indonesia was influenced by the Dutch.

886. Woodward, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Renaissans Jawa,” in *Matahari Dari Mataram: Menyelami Spiritualitas Jawa Rasional Ki Ageng Suryomentaram*, ed. Afthonul Afif (Yogyakarta, Penerbit Kepik, 2012), x.

887. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 100. See also, Bonneff, 16.

888. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, ed. Ki Grangsang Suryomentaram (Jakarta: CV. Haji MasAgung, 1990), 106-31.

In light of *panentheism* or “everything is in God” rather than pantheism or “everything is God,” as Endraswara mentioned,<sup>889</sup> Mulder explains that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes,

*[S]elf-knowledge and reflection upon experience as the sources of wisdom ... To them “God” is in the heart, it is the “God” they feel; it is Life and their being part of it, or, in the words of a mystic, it is in every beat of my heart that I feel “God.” It is Life that surrounds me and me being part of Life ... What is, is Life, continuity of existence, our sojourn here being a mere stop on the road “where we pause to have a drink” [urip kuwi mung mampir ngombe].*<sup>890</sup>

*Sangkan paraning dumadi* is a source of wisdom in which an individual will “always keep balancing the cosmos.”<sup>891</sup> In other words, in a cosmic sense, being a mystic is about being a subjective presence in one’s own life experience. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, “it is people themselves who can achieve *kasempurnaan* (perfection) by developing their self-knowledge and their understanding of the nature of life.”<sup>892</sup> Thus life perfection is in the world, here and now, and not the afterlife; it is a task to be fulfilled.<sup>893</sup> The fulfilment is inherently in *life as a time of being here and now* in the world through *laku* (the intertwining of action and contemplation) by remembering *sangkan paraning dumadi*.

Mulder interprets that life, as *sangkan paraning dumadi* refers to it, is “the essence and working of reality, of the All, is not material ... but process and stream.”<sup>894</sup> *Sangkan paraning dumadi* is the essence and the process of life. In Javanese mysticism, through *raos* (intuitive inner feeling), the essence and the process of life will reveal *kasunyatan*, as the

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889. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 202.

890. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 36. Emphasis added.

891. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 210.

892. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 36.

893. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 37.

894. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 38.

highest wisdom. In Buddhism, this Sanskrit term is rooted in the word “*sunya*, zero, O, center, meaning void and the all-comprising circle that symbolizes emptiness and concentrated essence.”<sup>895</sup> In other words, by knowing the essence and the process of *sangkan paraning dumadi*, an individual comes to nothingness of being “*manungsa tanpa semat, drajat lan kramat*” (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power) as the accomplishment of *Kawruh Jiwa*.

### *Manunggaling Kawula-Gusti*

In light of mysticism, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being and God) is the Javanese mystical union between individuals and God. Endraswara emphasizes that *manunggaling kawula* is “an experience, not a lesson” in which God is in the heart and God is closer than anything else in the reality of life.<sup>896</sup> One of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Javanese poets, R. Ranggawarsita, illustrated the mystical union of God and human beings as a stone on the top of a ring, with God as the stone and the human as the ring.<sup>897</sup> Because of the cosmological emphasis in Javanese mysticism, as shown in *sangkan paraning dumadi*, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is not a union in the afterlife, but rather an experience in the life here and now. Javanese mysticism “does not so much promise salvation or heaven, as it is directed towards interpreting worldly existence in a cosmological perspective.”<sup>898</sup> These concepts lead to a basic Javanese mysticism about the integration between humans, cosmos, and God.

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895. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 38.

896. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 48.

897. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 47.

898. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 29.

The mystical union as the essence of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* was influenced by Hinduism and Islam, particularly Sufism. *Manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is rooted in the dynamic relationship between *Brahman* (consciousness) and *Atman* (the self) in Hinduism: “‘I am *Brahman*.’ *Brahman* exists in and through me as an individual self.”<sup>899</sup> Referring to Raimon Panikkar, Joseph Bracken adds, “If *Brahman* be understood as an activity rather than as an entity, then *Atman* can be considered the subject of that activity. That is, *Brahman* is the unifying activity of consciousness and *Atman* is the primordial subject of consciousness.”<sup>900</sup> This affirms that the self is a mystical union of *Brahman* and *Atman*. Mulder pinpoints *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* as the highest stage of the mystical journey in Islam, or *mahrifat*, in which “the individual soul has blended with the universal soul and one’s actions have become pure *laku*, one’s life a permanent prayer to ‘God,’ irrespective of what one does—work, meditate, sleep, or eat.”<sup>901</sup> In other words, there is no separation between inward and outward, and both of them are one shared value of life. In line with Mulder, Abdul Munir Mulkhan highlights that according to Syekh Siti Jenar, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is “the purpose of life.”<sup>902</sup> *Manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is the basic life existence of human beings.

Because of the oneness between God and human beings, the genuine guide to *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is already in the human heart through *raos* (intuitive inner

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899. Bracken, *Divine Matrix*, 80-1.

900. Bracken, *Divine Matrix*, 80.

901. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life in Contemporary Java: Cultural Persistence and Change* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1978), 23. Mulder describes the four stages in the Islamic life journey from the lowest to the highest. They are *syariat* as life according to the religious rules; *tarekat* as life based on the consciousness of the essence of behavior, such as one who has an Islamic principle that “God is not to be met in Mecca but in one’s heart;” *hakekat* as life by confronting the truth; and *mahrifat* as life as the mystical union between human being and God (22-3).

902. Abdul Munir Mulkhan, *Syekh Siti Jenar: Konflik Elite, dan Pergumulan Islam-Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Narasi, 2015), 12.

feeling). The self is the core of the cosmos, where God dwells within each person. By *olah rasa/raos* (the management of intuitive inner feeling), an individual will meet *guru sejati*, or the genuine guru, as God who dwells in his or her heart. *Guru sejati* will “whisper purity through conscience.”<sup>903</sup> Through the dynamic of *olah rasa*, an individual operates in the intersection between God and the self. In light of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *raos* takes an essential aspect of self-transcendence into the practice and living harmoniously with others. Thus, in light of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, it should be understood why Ki Ageng Suryomentaram does not mention God in *Kawruh Jiwa*, because God is not separated from the self, but rather is blended with the self in oneness, while Javanese mysticism has the perspective that God is “*tan kena kinaya ngopo*,” meaning that a person cannot describe what God looks like because God is mysterious. However, other aspects of God can be and are described in Javanese mysticism, such as the omnipresence of God: “*Gusti ora sare*” (God never sleeps). *Manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, as a mystical union, should remain “a secret between the mystical servant [*kawula/abdi*] and Master [*Gusti/ndoro*].”<sup>904</sup> *Manunggaling kawula-Gusti* requires a mystic to strive “against egoistic motives and against pride in achievement, and proclaiming that one knows.”<sup>905</sup> In Javanese mysticism, God is beyond most names or doctrines. In other words, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is not knowing God, yet experiencing God in daily life through *raos*.

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903. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 297.

904. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 53.

905. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 52.

### *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*

The basic premise of *memayu hayuning bawana*<sup>906</sup> (to adorn the world) rests on the self-involvement of individuals through the essence and process of life, *sangkan paraning dumadi*, by “upholding the balance of the cosmos.”<sup>907</sup> From a Javanese perspective, *memayu hayuning bawana* is not a requirement for something to come from outside the self, but rather a virtue in which “peaceful living is the noble basis of Javanese society.”<sup>908</sup> Because *memayu hayuning bawana* is a virtue that teaches one how to be Javanese in communal life, there is a term “*durung Jawa* that is, not yet Javanese, not yet cultured and civilized—a person who does not yet know his manners and place in the order.”<sup>909</sup> This highlights Hadiwijono’s perspective that *kejawen* is an anthropological system, as I mentioned above. To uphold the balance of the cosmos, unity and harmony of life take an important role through the living of *rukun* (harmonious unity). Mulder explains:

*Rukun* is soothing over differences, co-operation, mutual acceptance, quietness of heart, and harmonious existence. The whole of society should be characterized by the spirit of *rukun*, but whereas its behavioural expression in relation to supernature and superiors is respectful, polite, obedient, and distant, its expression in the community and among one’s peers should be *akrab* (intimate) as in a family, cosy, and *kangen* (full of the feeling of belonging).<sup>910</sup>

Thus, *memayu hayuning bawana* should be inherent in a person’s being. Mulder highlights it as “the mystical ethic ... The good person is somebody who is in step with ‘God’ and the

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906. Literally, *memayu hayuning bawana* has a sense of feminine in which *hayu*: beauty and *bawana*: the world; thus, *hayuning bawana* means ‘the beauty of the world.’

907. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 53.

908. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 51.

909. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 39.

910. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 39.



god-given order of society.”<sup>911</sup> *Memayu hayuning bawana* shows that Javanese mysticism does not separate the personal from the communal or societal manner. Moreover, Javanese mysticism implies that “[an individual] has outward qualities and an inner potential—these two aspects are related ... that exists to establish harmony between the outward *lahir* and inner *batin* aspects of life, in the sense that the *batin* masters and guides the *lahir*, then earthly life may harmonize and be coordinated with the principle of ultimate oneness.”<sup>912</sup> *Memayu hayuning bawana* becomes an invitation for the self to build harmony with life, with life itself as a total being in the cosmos. *Memayu hayuning bawana* becomes the essence of the Javanese proverb *urip kuwi urup* (life is light).

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s desire to move beyond “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” demonstrated his longing to cultivate the self, as the core of the cosmos and as a being who searches for the meaning of life through a calling of *memayu hayuning bawana*, which is the notion of Javanese self-transcendence. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram invented *Kawruh Jiwa* not as a personal and exclusive mystical path, but rather as a communal and inclusive way, based on personal liberation for communal harmony. The essence of Javanese mysticism lies on “*self-mastery and sensitivity* ... It is an ethical way to wisdom and balance that need not be religiously expressed, although it always entails the cultivation of the *batin* and the exercise of refining one’s intuitive inner feeling, or *rasa* [*raos*], to sense the true dimensions of existence.”<sup>913</sup> In other words, Mulder highlights that Javanese mysticism requires “*the development of the inner being for sake of the mastery of self and social life*.”<sup>914</sup> Mastery of both individual and social life are integrated and cannot be separated, as Ki Ageng

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911. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 38.

912. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 20.

913. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 93. Emphasis added.

914. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 53. Emphasis added.

Suryomentaram emphasizes empathy and respecting *raos sami* (the *raos* of others) as the way of *memayu hayuning bawana* for living harmoniously and peacefully.

Thus, reflecting on *sangkan paraning dumadi*, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, and *memayu hayuning bawana*, Javanese mysticism implies that *Kawruh Jiwa* as self-knowledge is rooted deeply in the mystical viewpoint of “human existence in a cosmological context, making life itself a religious experience. In this view, it is not possible to separate the sacred from profane; they all participate in the unity of existence.”<sup>915</sup> *Kejawen* emphasizes holistic life as an integration of anthropos, cosmos, and theos, which, in Raimon Panikkar’s term is called *cosmotheandric*, as “the fruit of a mystical experience.”<sup>916</sup> *Cosmotheandric* “overcomes the dichotomy between so-called nature mysticism as a lower form of union with the World, and theistic mysticism as a supposedly superior form of union with God.”<sup>917</sup> All are integrated and blended in harmony.

#### Desire of Human Spirit:

“*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being)

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram realized that to be a prince was not his authentic self, which led him to have the desire to know his true self as he formulated: “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being). It took several years, from the beginning of his desire to satisfy his longing, to meet *uwong* (a human being) through intentional

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915. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 20.

916. Raimon Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religious Consciousness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), ix.

917. Panikkar, *Cosmotheandric Experience*, 151.

consciousness within the moments of life. I employ Lonergan's notion of desire, which Elizabeth Snedden highlighted, to discuss Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's desire. Snedden proposes three ways of appropriate desire in which self-knowledge is mediated by "introspection, interactions, and prayer and religious experience."<sup>918</sup>

The first way of appropriate desire is "paying attention to *the inner movements of our minds and hearts*, with particular reference to the fourth level of deliberation, choice and the pursuit of true value, where we are forming personality and character."<sup>919</sup> The first way of appropriate desire focuses on the self through introspection. Introspection itself refers to the process of seeking meaning or value through inquiry. The inner moments that influenced Ki Ageng Suryomentaram relate to others and to himself. As I described previously, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram struggled with his princely title when he looked at those with a different status. Once, on a train trip to Surakarta to attend a wedding ceremony, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was struck by the farm laborers in the rice fields; there were people who lived their lives in hardship, while "[Ki Ageng Suryomentaram] and others like him, were getting ready to partake of the splendors reserved for those of noble birth."<sup>920</sup> His introspection on the farm laborers was an ordinary experience that became an extraordinary experience of human value through an inner blending of mind and heart, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's intentional consciousness evoked an awakening moment for his self-authenticity as a prince. In light of spirituality, David G. Benner points out that a moment can be the awakening of self in which "each moment of awareness is a small awakening, and *each awakening can be a doorway to becoming ...* Awareness of anything opens us to the

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918. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 63.

919. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 69. Emphasis added.

920. Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince," 51.

transcendent.”<sup>921</sup> Of course, for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, it was not his first time seeing farm laborers, but this day became a special moment of the awakening of his true self.

The train trip developed his daily reflection on his relationship with the servants of the *kraton*. On the one hand, “there was the Prince, showered with honors and riches, on the other, the *abdi dalem* [the servant] whose very small salary barely enabled him to discharge his duties.”<sup>922</sup> In light of Lonergan’s notion of intentional consciousness, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s experience of awakening shows the sublative process from the data of sense to the data of consciousness. By being attentive, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram goes beyond feudalism in daily life into the value of humanity by understanding more in the wider context of self-authenticity. In his introspection, the farm laborers in the rice fields and the *abdi dalem* in the *kraton* are the data of sense from which he observed. The value of humanity, as the data of consciousness, becomes his insight, despite his title as a prince, due to his intentional introspection. Both the data of sense and the data of consciousness become the basis of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s judging for the desire of his true self.

Another inner moment occurred in the midst of deep grief, which affected Ki Ageng Suryomentaram for years after his first wife passed away after giving birth. In 1925, more than ten years after his first wife had died, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram married for the second time, this time to Sri Suhartini. Once, on the way to Parangtritis Beach, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was detained by the flooding of the Opak River, but he decided to swim across the river because no boatman was there that day. He knew this decision was influenced by disappointments in his life. In discussion with Prawirowiworo, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram said,

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921. Benner, *Spirituality and the Awakening Self*, 5.

922. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 51.

*Kowe bener, pancen si Suryomentaram kuwi judeg awit ditinggal mati dening embahe jing ditresnani, lan ditinggal mati dening bojone jing uga ditresnani, mula Suryomentaram banjur kepengin ngendat* (You are right, Suryomentaram was confused because my beloved grandfather and beloved wife died. So, Suryomentaram tried to commit suicide.)<sup>923</sup>

These losses pulled Ki Ageng Suryomentaram into *the dark night of the soul* in the midst of his discovery of what his true self was. In light of mysticism, Beverly Lanzetta explains that the dark night of the soul, or nothingness or emptiness, is “a deep and comprehensive darkness [even with God] ... The suffering is now immense.”<sup>924</sup> Nothingness is not a static state that traps and immobilizes a mystic, but rather it creates openness. As Marcel Bonneff notes, one night in 1927,

[Ki Ageng Suryomentaram] wakened his wife saying, “I have found what I was looking for ... it’s Suryomentaram who is disconnected; he’s the disillusioned *pangéran* [prince], the dissatisfied merchant, the disappointed peasant; he’s the source of disappointments (*tukang ora puas*). He has been unmasked (*konangan*). Henceforth I will always be able to find the man who bears the name of Suryomentaram.”<sup>925</sup>

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s disappointment was shown in the names he gave to his children, such as *Grangsang* (greedy), *Japrut* (unhappy face), *Dlureg* (deeply sad), *Gresah* (complaint), and *Semplah* (losing energy). For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, these names function as “*pepeling*” (reminders) for his children about bad attitudes which neglect the value of humanity.<sup>926</sup> These names were uncommon and have remained so, even up to the present day. It was the longing of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to find his true self despite the human tendency to desire prestigious names or titles as forms of public recognition. He

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923. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 6, 192.

924. Lanzetta, *Other Side of Nothingness*, 16-7.

925. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 52.

926. Ryan Sugiarto, email message to author, December 5, 2018.

sought his true self as a *manungsa tanpa ciri* (pure being), denying any titles for himself and his whole family, including the noble name of Kraton Yogyakarta.

In light of the mystic tradition, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's experience of nothingness or emptiness is categorized as *via negativa* (the negative way), rather than *via positiva* (the positive or affirmative way). The *negativa* of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram should be seen as part of his longing to find his true self. Thus, *via negativa* is not a bad way; rather, the "negative" leads to a transformative life. The Javanese way of life has the essence of both *via negativa* and *via positiva* as the Way to receive, to respond, and to transform the realities of life.

The second way of appropriate desire is "openness to learning about ourselves through *interactions with others in the communities to which we belong*—others whose responses can enlighten or give us feedback and whose generous living in incarnate value draws us powerfully to want to do likewise."<sup>927</sup> This second way of appropriate desire focuses on others through interaction. Self-knowledge always needs a community that nurtures the interiority of the self. The dynamic of communication, including confrontations with others, enlightens the values that an individual pursues. To satisfy his desire caused by the statement "*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" (I did not see a human being), Ki Ageng Suryomentaram decided to live among the people in Kroya, Cilacap, before the removal of his princely title. Then, after his title was removed, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and his family lived in Beringin, Salatiga. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, living outside the *kraton* was the way of subjective presence in which he learned, through empirical living among people, to satisfy his unrestricted desire to know the true self. This desire is not only an inward journey in his search for true self, but also an outward journey towards self-transcendence.

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927. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 69. Emphasis added.

Through his empirical living in the midst of society, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram found a different way of life due to *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge). This is in line with John Dewey's notion of experience. As Dewey states: "[I]f an experience arouses curiosity, strengthens initiative, and sets up desires and purposes that are sufficiently intense to carry a person over dead places in the future, continuity works in a very different way. Every experience [becomes] a moving force."<sup>928</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Ki Hadjar Dewantara developed a concept of education which is called *Taman Siswa* (students' garden). Similar to Dewey's idea of progressive education, *Taman Siswa* emphasizes a learning process of experience beyond the limitation of the classroom and develops education as an interesting process for students. Mulder highlights that both Ki Hadjar Dewantara and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasize "self-knowledge and reflection upon experience as the source of wisdom," thus empirical experience plays an important role in understanding what life is.<sup>929</sup>

This emphasis on empirical experience is also in line with Lonergan's notion of desire in which human desire is not only a personal and inward reflection but also the objectivity of interiority which should be sought through empirical experience. Desire is not only about interiority but also about subjective presence, which must go beyond one's self to others. Michele Saracino highlights,

The unrestricted desire to know prohibits the subject from adopting an inward posture. Instead of dismissing the validity of self-reflection altogether, Lonergan shows that reflection is only one step in the arduous task of knowing. Reflection on oneself comes after attending to the empirical, the experience that flows through the body. Consequently, Lonergan understands

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928. John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), 31. John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer who proposed progressive education based on pragmatism. Dewey focuses on the correlation between the process of actual experience and education.

929. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 36.

*the body as a fact of humanity* that enables the reception of sense data, instead of something to be reified, ignored, or dismissed ... It is impossible for the subject to disengage from his/her body or the world because s/he is *already incarnate in the world*. Still, in order to avoid becoming a disengaged subject, Lonergan's subject is invited by wonder into questioning beyond mere reflections. Lonergan's subject is obligated *to understand, judge, and decide in order to achieve self-transcendence and avoid being alienated from God and others*.<sup>930</sup>

By living in the midst of society and being a well-digger, a *batik* peddler, and a farmer, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram learned through empirical experiences the way of transforming data of sense into data of consciousness to gain objectivity of his desire. "*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" became his unrestricted desire to know authentic subjectivity in relation to others, both personally and communally.

In 1921, due to his desire to find his true self and achieve self-transcendence, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, along with Ki Hadjar Dewantara and others, was involved in a routine group discussion of the *Taman Siswa* Movement, which focused on winning independence and "the development of the general level of education and the national consciousness of the Indonesian people."<sup>931</sup> Ki Hadjar Dewantara later established the first formal education of *Taman Siswa* on July 3, 1922. Thus, to find objectivity of his desire, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram transcended beyond his personal identity to reach others more widely and to understand his own desire more deeply. In the 1930s, after Ki Ageng Suryomentaram left his farm in Beringin, Salatiga and moved back to Yogyakarta, Bonneff noted that he, along with his friends, established *Pakempalan Kawula Ngajogjakarta*, "a movement whose humanitarian and social initiatives were of greater importance than its political objectives."<sup>932</sup> His involvement in humanitarian concerns was becoming wider, including "the setting up of

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930. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 80.

931. Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince," 53.

932. Bonneff, "Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince," 53.



agricultural cooperatives and *lurik* factories, propositions to revise the taxation system, elimination of illiteracy, etc.”<sup>933</sup> During his lifetime, he gave lectures about *Kawruh Jiwa* in many cities, as well as improving the concept of *Kawruh Jiwa* itself. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram lived in Yogyakarta until March 18, 1962, when he died at the age of seventy. He was buried in Kanggotan, Bantul, in the same cemetery complex as his maternal grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI.

The third way of appropriate desire is “perseverance in prayerful *search for union with God* and reflection on the received tradition that enshrines so much wisdom.”<sup>934</sup> This focus on God is achieved through religious experience. In the search for self-knowledge, the self must be connected, by one’s religious tradition, to the presence of God. In the inner-self there is an intimacy shared with the Ultimate Reality. As I explained in Chapter 3, for Lonergan, human desire cannot be separated from the divine aspect because human desire is due to *being in love with God* as the capacity for self-transcendence, which enshrines Christian wisdom. During his lifetime, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram went to the Goa Langse and Goa Cerme caves, the beach at Parangtritis, and certain sacred tombs as a contemplative practice within Javanese mysticism called *tapa bisu* (to be solitary in a silent place). Another contemplative practice is *tapa ngrame* (to be solitary while doing daily activities), in which Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasized *raos* or *rasa* (intuitive inner feeling). Sugiarto explains that *raos* is “an intertwining of cognition (*nalar*) and inner feeling of solitude (*budi wening*).”<sup>935</sup> Moreover, *raos* is “*guru sejati*” (the genuine guru) in which God dwells, as

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933. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 53.

934. Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 69. Emphasis added.

935. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 16.

Suwardi Endraswara mentioned.<sup>936</sup> As Lonergan enshrines Christian wisdom, so does Ki Ageng Suryomentaram enshrine *raos*, a Javanese wisdom, as the core of *Kawruh Jiwa*.

As with many mystics, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram is rooted in a particular time, place, belief system, culture, and social context. Each of these contexts is required to understand personal spirituality through a broader lens of community. “*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” is the core of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s self-transcendence. Walter E. Conn identifies “the self [as] rooted in the premise that every person has a *radical desire* to reach out, to move beyond, [and] to transcend the self.”<sup>937</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram expressed his radical desire through *Kawruh Jiwa* as a mystical path for authentic being. It is a radical desire because “mysticism is therefore always *revolutionary* and is perceived by the institution as disturbing, if not heretical.”<sup>938</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram showed his revolutionary path by rejecting the title of prince and leaving the *kraton*. It was the path of authenticity that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was seeking. Additionally, Conn stresses that “authentic self-realization results not from a self-centered effort to fulfill one’s every wish, but from a movement beyond oneself in an attempt to realize the good of others.”<sup>939</sup> Reflecting on Conn’s perspective, “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” is a fundamental foundation of movement beyond oneself; Ki Ageng Suryomentaram integrated his body, mind and feelings as a holistic being on his path to find humanity. He went beyond himself as a prince, giving up *semat, drajat lan kramat* (wealth, public recognition, and power). No

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936. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 296.

937. Conn, “Self-Transcendence,” 323. Emphasis added.

938. Willigis Jäger, *Search for the Meaning of Life: Essays and Reflections on the Mystical Experience* (Liguori, MO: Triumph Books, 1995), 214. Emphasis added.

939. Conn, “Self-Transcendence,” 324.

doubt, his self-transcendence was to find fulfilment in life through meaning, truth, value, and love.

### His Mystical Way: *Kawruh Jiwa* (Self-Knowledge)

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's desire came from his recognition "*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" (I did not see a human being). His desire was not inspired by an abstract theory, but was rooted in his critical reflection toward empirical life which looks like a theater. People tend to wear masks for covering their authenticity as humans. In other words, life becomes a fake reality in which the self performs his or her role as a false self. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram confessed that he did not see a human being. Thus, "*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" is the basis of his mystical way which attempts to understand the Javanese concept of the self as a microcosm in macrocosm. The self has to live in harmonious integration between anthropos, cosmos, and theos. "*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" expresses a deep longing for self-transcendence in relation to other selves due to *ingsun sejati* (the true self). In other words, *ingsun sejati*, as a Javanese philosophy of life, is the capacity of self-transcendence as a lifelong process. "*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" is Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's consciousness of how to be a true self without privileges, such as having the title of prince. In his book *Mystical Consciousness*, Louis Roy quotes Selly King:

[T]he mystic path entails *radical self-transformation*, precisely in that one's sense of who and what one is is overturned at its foundation. This being the case, how could a mystic be expected to determine what is self and what is other in a mystical experience? The self is in fact becoming other-than-what it-was.<sup>940</sup>

This quotation affirms that the mystical way requires radical self involvement, such as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram practiced through repudiating his title of prince and becoming an

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940. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 125.

ordinary person. This is radical self-transformation. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa*, or self-knowledge, is the way of self-transformation through self-mastery and sensitivity in a life-long process to be *ingsun sejati* (true self) for authenticity of the self.

What precisely does *Kawruh Jiwa* mean? Ki Ageng Suryomentaram described,

*[K]awruh jiwa punika kawruh raos. Kawruh jiwa punika dede agami lan dede wulangan awon sae, ingkang ngangge pepacuh “Aja mangkono lan kudu mangkono” lan dede lampah utawi sirikan. Dados kawruh jiwa punika kawruh ingkang meruhi dateng jiwa lan sawateg-wategipun, kados dene kawruh kewan lan kawruh tetaneman lan sapanunggalanipun, lan sawateg-wategipun. (Kawruh Jiwa is kawruh raos. Kawruh Jiwa is neither a religion, nor a teaching about good and bad with a prohibited instruction “Don’t do this and don’t do that,” and [kawruh jiwa] is not a conduct of avoiding taboo. Thus, kawruh jiwa is kawruh, a knowledge of the soul characters, and likewise kawruh, a knowledge of animal and plant characters, etc.)*<sup>941</sup>

*Kawruh Jiwa* as self-knowledge requires a holistic inquiry, through which an individual is drawn to understand his or her soul characters by cultivating *raos*. *Kawruh Jiwa* does not belong to any religious teaching but rather is a self-critical reflection based on praxis through “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” (learning one’s own *raos*) as a form of contemplation.<sup>942</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s learning one’s own *raos* was formulated into the phrase “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” as his mystical longing of *ingsun sejati* in his ordinary life. David Benner points out, “Mystics are, therefore, much more defined by their longing than by their experience.”<sup>943</sup> For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, the longing of his life is *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge). He affirmed that *Kawruh Jiwa* brings human beings *mardika* (freedom) and *tentrem* (tranquility) in life, and these lead to true happiness. True happiness requires a capability of the self to be an adjustable person in responding to life experiences. This is

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941. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 1.

942. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 1.

943. Benner, *Spirituality and the Awakening Self*, 76.

called *mulur mungkret*.<sup>944</sup> *Mulur mungkret* is about the mastering of desire in the realm of happiness and sadness during the life journey. In other words, true happiness depends not on the changing of life circumstances but on mastering the ability to find happiness in all circumstances.

*Kawruh Jiwa* has essential aspects: *raos*, *nyawang karep*, *junggringan*, *pangawikan pribadi*, and *sakepenake*, *sabutuhe*, *saperlune*, *sacukupe*, *samestine*, *lan sabenere* (true happiness: freedom and tranquility). These aspects are a contemplative journey. Now I will discuss in detail the role of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's true self (*ingsun sejati*) as a mystical way of life.

### ***Raos: Guru Sejati (Intuitive Inner Feeling: The Genuine Guru)***

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram said that *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) is *kawruh raos*. What precisely is meant by the term *raos* or *rasa* (intuitive inner feeling)?<sup>945</sup> Previously, I quoted Sugiarto's definition of *raos*, which is "an intertwining of cognition (*nalar*) and inner feeling of solitude (*budi wening*)."<sup>946</sup> This definition shows that *raos* does not only refer to feelings, moods, and sensations, but rather *raos* refers to the holistic human being through the intertwining of cognition and inner feeling. Koentjoro Soeparno argues that Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) and Sultan Agung (1593-1645) were in agreement with their ideas of cognition,

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944. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 7-14. See also, Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 61-2.

945. Javanese has three registers. The terms *raos* and *rasa* are identical in meaning, with *raos* occurring at the highest register, while *rasa* occurs at the medium and the lowest registers. *Rasa* in Javanese is also spelled the same as *rasa* in Indonesian, but they are different in both pronunciation and meaning. *Rasa* in Indonesian has a narrow meaning, referring solely to the feeling of emotions. In this dissertation, I use the term *raos* instead of *rasa*, except in direct quotations.

946. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 16.

affection, and conation, and *cipta*, *rasa*, and *karsa*, respectively. Both affection and *rasa* refer to feelings or emotions, but for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *raos* and *rasa* have a different meaning of “soul” or *jiwa* in Indonesian.<sup>947</sup> Thus, *raos* is the complex essence of a human being because *raos* is integrated in life experiences themselves, which is called “*raos gesang* (*raos* of life).”<sup>948</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram explains that *raos gesang* points to life experiences from childhood until old age in every circumstance, of both *susah* (sadness) and *bahagia* (happiness). The interchangeability of sadness and happiness requires an individual *ngonangi* (to discern) his or her *raos* because “*ngonangi raos piyambak*” (to discern his or her own *raos*) will ensure that an individual does not become trapped in his or her false self.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes that:

*Sumerep raos puniko beda kaliyan mangertos raos. Sumerep raos punika tanpa mikir. Mila sumerep raos punika boten angel. Sami kaliyan sumerep barang-barang, tiyang inggih tanpa mikir, mila boten angel. Soalipun naming soal merem utawi melek. Mekaten ugi sumerep raos punika soalipun naming soal mripat batin merem utawi melek. Mangertos punika wohing mikir. Mikir punika mbedak-bedakaken lan nyamek-nyamekaken barang utawi raos, lan ngurutaken lelampahan satengker-satengker saking barang lan raos wonten salebeting jaman, lan nyambet-nyambetaken sebab lan kadadosan wonten ing lelampahan satengker lan lelampahan satengker sanesipun saking barang utawi raos. Mila mangertos punika saged angel saged gampil. (To see raos is different from understanding raos. To see raos is easy because one does not need to think, just as one can see an object without thinking. What is needed is only the opening of the physical eyes or the eyes of the heart. However, understanding raos or physical objects is accomplished through thinking. Thinking allows one to distinguish differences and similarities of objects and raos, and to trace their movements step-by-step through periods of time. It allows one to make a connection in the causality process. It allows an individual to understand raos or objects easily or with difficulty.)<sup>949</sup>*

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947. Koentjoro Soeparno, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram (1892-1962) Guru Psikologi Eksistensialis Nusantara: Belajar Mindfulness tanpa Meditasi,” in Ryan Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos: Saintifikasi Kawruh Jiwa Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Ifada, 2015), vii.

948. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 14.

949. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 3, 101-2.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes understanding *raos* over seeing *raos* and using the eyes of the heart rather than physical eyes. Understanding *raos* (*mangertos raos*) requires the self to be aware of and to contemplate life experiences. It seems that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was influenced by Sufism, especially the thoughts of Ibn ‘Arabi, who points at “the heart (*qalb*) as the seat and faculty of *ma’rifa* (a continually transformative knowing).”<sup>950</sup> Michael Sells highlights that for Ibn ‘Arabi, the heart becomes the place for the “mutual construction of divine and human” where a mystic becomes a knower in his or her responses to the reality of life.<sup>951</sup> This highlights the Javanese mystical way of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, as I described previously.

*Raos* takes an important role in the Javanese philosophy of life. Mulder explains,

The Javanese road to insight into reality is the trained and sensitive *rasa* (intuitive inner feeling). In mysticism, the essence of reality is grasped by the *rasa* and revealed in the quiet *batin*. By overcoming the fetters of everyday existence and the phenomenal world, [a human being] may free himself [and herself] to really understand and achieve direct knowledge of the mystery of existence.<sup>952</sup>

Only through *raos* will an individual approach his or her life wisely, because the word *raos* is rooted in the word “*rahsa*, *rahasya*, which means mystery, hidden.”<sup>953</sup> Yusak Tridarmanto and Kees de Jong affirm that *raos* becomes “the media of justification” in daily life.<sup>954</sup> There is a connection between mystery and justification since, for the Javanese, life is under the

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950. Michael A. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 91.

951. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings*, 92.

952. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 38. The second and the third emphases added.

953. Mulder, *Pribadi dan Masyarakat Jawa* (Jakarta: Penerbit Sinar Harapan, 1989), 23.

954. Yusak Tridarmanto and Kees de Jong, “Rasa Sedjati: Misi dalam Konteks Budaya Jawa,” in *Belajar Alkitab Itu Tidak Pernah Tamat*, ed. Julianus Mojau and Salmon Pamantung (Jakarta: BPK. Gunung Mulia, 2017), 168.

mystical scene. The Javanese realize that the individual is a microcosm that has to place himself or herself under the scope of the macrocosm. This requires an individual to go beyond physical experience in order to find the meaning or value of life. For that purpose, an individual needs to discover meaning or value in the realm of inner experience through *raos* as a spiritual exercise or “mak[ing] a sharper *batin*.”<sup>955</sup> This will prepare an individual to respond lovingly in any circumstance. For example, in October of 2010, Mount Merapi in Yogyakarta erupted for many weeks. Yogyakarta was a dark city for several days because of the volcanic dust. The Yogyakarta people did not respond by blaming Mount Merapi, becoming angry with God, or raving because of their suffering, even in the midst of a natural disaster. Instead, they realized Mount Merapi was nurturing the earth of Yogyakarta. The *Kawula Ngajogjakarta* community placed huge banners at strategic road intersections, and on one of them was written: “Whatever is happening right now, Mount Merapi is our friend!” This is the Javanese way of justification by cultivating *raos* for wise living.

Magnis-Suseno explains that “*raos* [for the Javanese] is not a tool to reach further knowledge, but rather the goal of himself or herself ... [to be] aware of his or her true existence, an awareness which draws to his or her satisfaction and value. In *raos*, the self unites with the divine where there is an integration of *raos* between the human being and God.”<sup>956</sup> In Javanese mysticism, there is an intersection between the *raos* of human beings and the *raos* of God. This intersection, or *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being and God), takes place during the journey of *sangkan paraning dumadi* (from origin to destiny). In short, *raos* is “*sang ADA yang satu*” (the individual BEING), and refers to the

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955. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 299.

956. Franz Magnis-Suseno, *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijakan Hidup Jawa* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 1988), 131.



self-awareness prompted by both the cognition and the inner feeling of the self.<sup>957</sup> It is this self-awareness that allows an individual to recognize and build true relationships with himself or herself, with others, and with God.

*Guru sejati* (the genuine guru) dwells within *raos*. Tridarmanto and de Jong quote a Javanese text, *Asmarandana*: “*Rasa sejati pinangkanipun saking Gusti Allah. Tanpa rasa sejati, manungsa mboten leres wonten ngarsanipun Pangeran*” (Genuine *raos* comes from God. Without genuine intuitive inner feeling, human beings will not be true before the face of God.)<sup>958</sup> When *guru sejati* illuminates *raos*, an individual becomes peaceful and tranquil in all circumstances, whether good or bad. *Guru sejati* helps an individual “to identify problems, and to find the right decision and solution.”<sup>959</sup> At this point, an individual reaches *sejatining raos* (genuine *raos*), where he or she finds the truth in thinking, feeling, and doing because “*raos* refers to the deepest part of human life as well as the center of will and the basic consideration of all kinds of wisdoms.”<sup>960</sup> To reach genuine *raos*, an individual must have “self-mastery and sensitivity,” a lifelong process that in Javanese is called *olah raos/rasa* (training of the *raos/rasa*).<sup>961</sup> The function of *olah rasa* is to distinguish between *raos kramadangsa* and *raos manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power).<sup>962</sup>

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957. Magnis-Suseno, *Etika Jawa*, 130. See especially Footnote 110 at the bottom of this page in *Etika Jawa*.

958. Tridarmanto and de Jong, “Rasa Sedjati,” 169.

959. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 300.

960. Tridarmanto and de Jong, “Rasa Sedjati,” 168. See especially Footnote 9 at the bottom of this page in “Rasa Sedjati.”

961. Mulder, *Mysticism in Java*, 93.

962. *Kramadangsa* is a focus on the self and the self’s identity; it can be a neutral to positive egoism, or it can be negative self-centeredness.

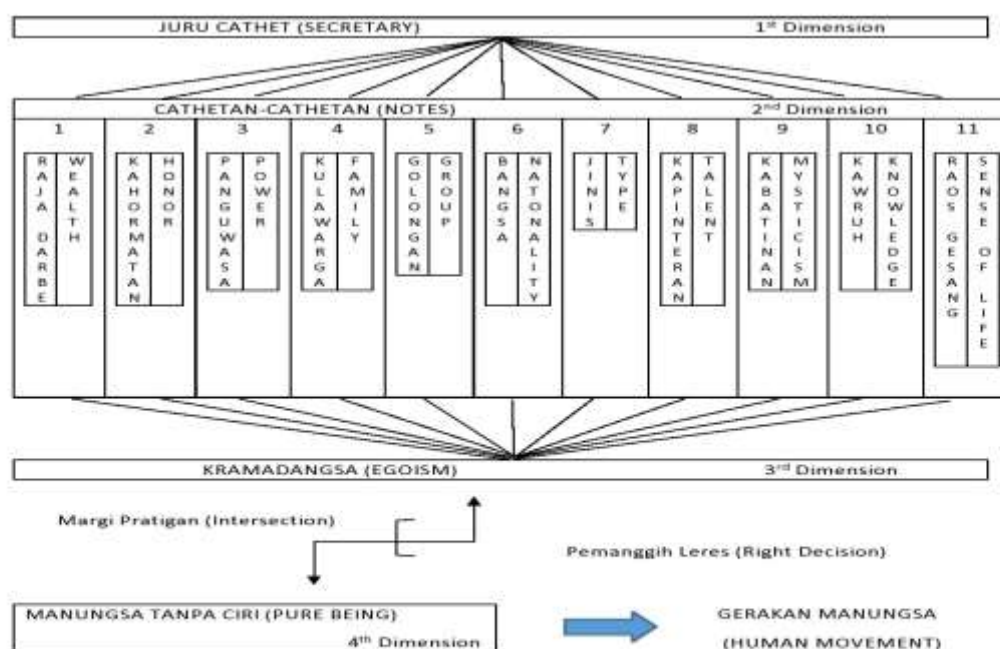


Figure 5.1: Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's *Kawruh Jiwa* (Self-Knowledge)

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram defined the self through a dynamic of four dimensions, as shown in Figure 5.1.<sup>963</sup> The first dimension is *juru cathet* (secretary). On this level, an individual records his or her life experiences through the five senses. Each individual will have different records, depending on the experiences he or she has. The second level is *cathetan-cathetan* (notes). Here, an individual interprets and makes notes about their experiences, and these notes influence his or her life, personally and communally. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram identifies eleven types of notes: “*raja darbe* (wealth), *kahormatan* (honor), *panguwasa* (power), *kulawarga* (family), *bangsa* (nationality), *jinis* (type), *kapinteran* (talent), *kabatinan* (mysticism), *kawruh* (knowledge), *raos gesang* (sense of life),” and each note of experience can be sorted into one of these eleven categories.<sup>964</sup> The third level is *kramadangsa* (egoism) as “*tukang mikir, ingkang mikir butuhing cathetan-cathetan wau*”

963. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 106-31.

964. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 110-13.

(the thinker, who thinks about his or her need for the eleven types of notes).<sup>965</sup> By his or her cognition, an individual accumulates notes and uses them to construct personal and communal identities dependent on his or her preferences during the lifelong journey. On this level, an individual has to recognize his or her desire (*karep*) when dealing with the eleven types of notes because the character of *kramadangsa* is “to drive an individual to seek his or her own satisfaction without consideration to others and tends to be arbitrary.”<sup>966</sup> In other words, the self becomes the object of *kramadangsa* by attributing overwhelming importance and influence to the notes in his or her life, for example: I am rich, I am poor, I am Christian, I am Muslim, I am a medical doctor, etc. These identifications can easily cause an individual to create barriers between himself or herself and others, hindering relationships. Because of this, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram places *margi pratigan* (an intersectional way) between the third level, *kramadangsa*, and the fourth level, *manungsa tanpa ciri* (pure being). At this intersection, an individual needs to perform *pangawikan pribadi* (self-examination or discernment). Nanik Prihartanti highlights that in this intersection, an individual has two choices between *raos kramadangsa*, which leads to egoism, and *raos manungsa tanpa ciri*, which leads to altruism.<sup>967</sup> If an individual chooses *kramadangsa*, he or she will be stuck in the third dimension and will be unable to move beyond restrictive egoism. However, if an individual chooses *manungsa tanpa ciri*, he or she will continue to the fourth dimension, where *manungsa tanpa ciri* takes place. Prihartanti adds that the first, second, and third levels are activating physical, emotional, and cognitive aspects, respectively, while in the fourth

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965. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 102.

966. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 85.

967. Nanik Prihartanti, *Kepribadian Sehat Menurut Konsep Suryomentaram* (Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University Press, 2004), 38. See also, Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 109. Prihartanti and Sugiarto do not explain altruism.

level is “activating intuition.”<sup>968</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram affirms that “the fourth level will cause an individual to acquire compassion and awareness of his or her imperfections.”<sup>969</sup> Thus, *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* will cause an individual to gain freedom and tranquility, both personally and communally, through the guidance of *guru sejati*.

### ***Nyawang Karep (Observing Desire)***

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram proposes that an individual prompts two components in *Kawruh Jiwa: aku* (the self) and *karep* (desire). Desire is an essential component that causes an individual stay alive. Moreover, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram stresses that, while still in “his [or her] mother’s womb, the desire to be born is already present (*nalika wonten wetenganipun biyung sampun wonten karep lair*); desire is everlasting, eternal (*karep punika langgeng*).”<sup>970</sup> This affirms that the self and desire are part of an individual’s existence from the beginning. In the life journey, because the character of *kramadangsa* tends to egoism and self-centeredness, an individual becomes “the victim of his [or her] supposed needs which result in his [or her] *karep* (desire) exerting such a powerful influence on his [or her] life that he [or she] confuses desire with true human existence.”<sup>971</sup> At this point the self has to observe his or her desire. Someya Yoshimichi describes the relationship between the self and desire:

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968. Prihartanti, “Merajut Kebahagiaan Bersama Dalam Masyarakat Multikultural,” in *Matahari Dari Mataram: Menyelami Spiritualitas Jawa Rasional Ki Ageng Suryomentaram*, ed. Afthonul Afif (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kepik, 2012), 201.

969. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 18.

970. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 56. See also, Ki Ageng Suryamentaram, *Wejangan Kawruh Beja Sawetah* (Malang: Yayasan Junggring Salaka, 1998), 22.

971. Bonneff, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman, Javanese Prince,” 55.

*Aku* [the self] is an observer who is observing without like or dislike, without blaming or hoping. *Aku* does not set, does not push, does not love, and does not guide *karep*. “*Aku kuwi tukang nyawang karep*” (*Aku* is an observer of my desires). *Aku* and *karep* have different characters: *Aku* gives meaning to human actions, while *karep* leads to human actions. *Aku* is never doing, while *karep* directs human beings to reach *semat* [wealth], *drajat* [public recognition], and *kramat* [power].<sup>972</sup>

*Nyawang karep* (observing desire) plays an important role for an individual in observing the changing of life between sad and happy circumstances. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram highlights that human desire is *mulur-mungkret* (flexible), meaning the character of desire is changeable and depends on individual concerns. For the Javanese, *nyawang karep* takes an important role in daily life as a term: *eling lan waspada* (be aware and watchful). Also, the self or “*aku* is not clear yet,” as the self has to become aware of and watchful toward his or her desires.<sup>973</sup> *Nyawang karep* is a step toward self-mastery and sensitivity through *olah rasa* (training of the *raos/rasa*). In the Javanese philosophy of life, the self, as an individual, exists with others in communal life. Mulder highlights, “Personal desire, ambition, and passions are thought to endanger the social harmony; a person should give himself [or herself] up to community rather than try to impose his [or her] will.”<sup>974</sup> Thus, *nyawang karep* is an obligation from the self to others for a harmonious life, instead of the self-satisfaction that can cause a disharmonious life.

When *nyawang karep* leads an individual to observe “*jagad saisinipun lan lelampahan sedaya, tiyang inggih kraos ‘kuwi dudu aku’*” (the entire world and its

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972. Someya Yoshimichi, “Bagaimana Orang Mendapatkan Kebahagiaan Melalui Belajar Filsafat Ki Ageng Suryomentaram,” in *Matahari Dari Mataram: Menyelami Spiritualitas Jawa Rasional Ki Ageng Suryomentaram*, ed. Afthonul Afif (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kepik, 2012), 171.

973. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawen*, 188.

974. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 38.

movements, an individual realizes that “it is not me.”)<sup>975</sup> *Nyawang karep* is a practice of *Kawruh Jiwa* which helps an individual to distinguish *aku* from *karep*. An individual then will be able to discern his or her *raos* and put *raos* in the natural system. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram says, “*Jebul lelampahanipun raos-raos punika miturut aturan alam. Yen sumerep aturan alam wau, tiyang lajeng tumindak miturut aturan alam wau lan raosipun beja*” (Indeed, the work of *raos* follows the natural system. If [an individual] knows and follows the natural system, then the individual will be happy).<sup>976</sup> *Nyawang karep* leads to “true-happiness which is *mboten gumantung wekdal, papan, lan kawontenan* (not dependent on time, place, or condition).”<sup>977</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram notes that through *nyawang karep*, an individual will be able to accept and adjust in the cosmological system as the Javanese proverb says: *ojo nggege mangsa* (do not force the seasons). Seasons are always changing, and they change in their own time; neither change nor time can be controlled by humans. Likewise, life is always shifting between sadness and happiness, sweetness and bitterness, and so on. The only way to respond to life’s changes is to learn from *piageming gesang* (each experience).

### ***Pangawikan Pribadi (Personal Discernment)***

For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, the step after *nyawang karep* is *pangawikan pribadi* (personal discernment).<sup>978</sup> While the self is neutral in his or her variety of desires in *nyawang*

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975. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 32.

976. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 33.

977. Prihartanti, *Kepribadian Sehat Menurut Konsep Suryomentaram*, 44.

978. Some authors translate the terms *pangawikan pribadi* and *mawas diri* as “self-examination” or “awareness examined.” I prefer to translate it as “personal discernment” because this relates to Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s practice of communal discernment which is called *junggringan*.

*karep*, during *pangawikan pribadi* the self has to discern the means to filter, to distinguish, to determine intentionally, and to make a decision. The key of *pangawikan pribadi* is “*nyumerepi awakipun piyambak*” (to know oneself) through the process of *olah rasa*.<sup>979</sup> Darmanto Jatman mentions that *pangawikan pribadi* is part of the Javanese rational approach to the reality of life, as well as a part of Javanese Bratakesawa mysticism.<sup>980</sup> Jatman describes that in Bratakesawa, the quality of self-examination has five levels:

*Nanding sarira*: an individual compares himself or herself with others to find that he or she is higher than others.

*Ngukur sarira*: an individual measures others with himself or herself as the standard.

*Tepa sarira*: an individual has empathy for others.

*Mawas diri [pangawikan pribadi]*: an individual is honest with himself or herself.

*Mulat sarira*, which is deeper than *pangawikan pribadi*: an individual finds his or her true self.<sup>981</sup>

The levels above show that in *nanding sarira*, *ngukur sarira*, and *tepa sarira*, an individual considers others while constructing his or her identity, while in *pangawikan pribadi*, an individual will take himself or herself as the only consideration.

By being honest with himself or herself, an individual becomes open and accepts the truth of who he or she is. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram stresses,

*Tiyang punika mboten saged angsal pangawikan pribadi saking tiyang sanes, saking buku utawi saking guru, nanging namung saking awakipun piyambak ... pangawikan pribadi punika dipun wiwiti saking samangke ing ngriki awakipun piyambak punika kepingin punapa, tumindak punapa, mikir punapa lan kraos punapa.* (An individual cannot receive *pangawikan pribadi* from others, from a book, or from a teacher, but only from himself or herself ... *pangawikan pribadi* begins with himself or herself: what is his or her

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979. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 41. See also, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Pilsapat Rasa-Hidup: Wedjangan Kjai Ageng Surjomentaram*, trans. Kjai Pronowidigdo (Jogjakarta: Pertjetakan DJIT GUAN, 1957), 18-30.

980. Hadiwijono, *Kebatinan dan Injil*, 44-62. Bratakesawa is a nineteenth century Javanese mystic from Yogyakarta.

981. Darmanto Jatman, *Psikologi Jawa* (Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya, 1997), 9.

desire, what are his or her actions, what are his or her thoughts, and what are his or her feelings.)<sup>982</sup>

The meaning of *pangawikan pribadi* is in line with the concept of discernment, as a spiritual practice in Christianity, which employs several human layers: thoughts, emotions or feelings, and desires.<sup>983</sup> Discernment is an individual growth process of the self and God through the search for clarity. The goal of discernment is action and “*murugaken beja*” (creating happiness), as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram explained.<sup>984</sup> The goal itself refers to *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power). In short, *pangawikan pribadi* (personal discernment) is a transformative process of the self to have the capacity for self-transcendence or *mulat sarira*.

### ***Junggringan (Communal Discernment)***

Alongside *pangawikan pribadi* as personal discernment, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram proposes *junggringan* as for communal discernment. The term *junggringan* is rooted in *pewayangan*, which appears in the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* epics; “*kayangan* is the meeting place in nirvana where the gods discuss the problems of humans in the world.”<sup>985</sup> Ki Prasetyo Atmosutidjo, the chairperson of the *Kawruh Jiwa* Community of Yogyakarta, explains that *Kawruh Jiwa* has three kinds of *junggringan*: *junggringan* as a small scope, *Junggringan Salaka* as a medium scope, and *Junggringan Salaka Agung* as the largest scope

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982. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 2.

983. Rex A. Pai, *Discernment: A Way of Life. Membedakan Roh-Roh: Suatu Cara Membaharui Hidup* (Medan: Bina Media, 2002), 2.

984. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 2.

985. Prihartanti, “Model Suryomentaram,” in *Psikologi Terapan: Melintas Batas Disiplin Ilmu*, ed. Johana E. Prawitasari (Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga, 2012), 153. See also, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 35.



of meetings.<sup>986</sup> Meetings of *junggringan* use the method of *kandha-takon* (question-and-answer process), which emphasizes the “ongoing awareness of self-existence, awareness that I am here and now.”<sup>987</sup> In other words, *junggringan* uses sharing and interpersonal dialogue. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram highlights that in *junggringan* there is no “*guru-murid*” (teacher-student) hierarchy.<sup>988</sup> Rather, all people are equal and each individual is a teacher as well as a student.

Prihartanti describes that the object of *kandha-takon* is “awareness of body (*rasa ning raga*), awareness of thought [or desire] (*rasa ning pikir/rasa ning karep*), awareness of *raos* (*rasa ning rasa*). In short, being aware and conducting a dialogue with ‘*aku*’ who is present with all feeling and thinking.”<sup>989</sup> This affirms that *Kawruh Jiwa* emphasizes *aku* (the self) as a holistic subject in which body, thought, and the intuitive inner self (*raos*) are intertwined and blended. In other words, in *junggringan*, each individual present is *nularake beja* (sharing happiness) which leads to a way of being “*beja sesarengan* (happiness together), *wasis* (responsive, smart), *kendel* (brave), *sregep* (diligent), *sugih* (rich or adept), and *guyup sesarengan* (living harmoniously).”<sup>990</sup> Thus, *junggringan* is the sharing of personal journeys and creating a harmonious communal life. *Junggringan* has parallels with communal discernment in the Christian tradition. Elizabeth Liebert describes the growing process of

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986. Ki Prasetyo Atmosutidjo, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Masa Pencarian Makna Hidup, Ide and Pemikiran Awal,” in *Handbook Ilmu Kawruh Jiwa: Suryomentaram, Riwayat, dan Jalan Menuju Bahagia*, ed. Sapta Widi Wusana (Yogyakarta: Dinas Kebudayaan Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta, 2015), 103.

987. Prihartanti, “Model Suryomentaram,” 153.

988. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 35.

989. Prihartanti, “Model Suryomentaram,” 153.

990. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 133.

individual self-knowledge as the most fundamental aspect in communal discernment. It comes,

[O]ver time through the habit of self-reflection and from welcoming the honest and loving feedback of friends and colleagues. Age can season this self-knowledge, but age is by no means a guarantee that it exists. Furthermore, there is always more to discover and own about oneself, no matter one's age ... even a single member who lacks self-awareness will hamper a discerning group's ability to listen deeply for the presence of the Spirit, because the Spirit often shows up in the inner motions of the individuals in the group.<sup>991</sup>

Communal discernment focuses on the growth of self-knowledge in the communal setting, so that people may thrive on dialogue. Communal discernment requires that the participants see "one another as equals. No one is the expert in dialogue."<sup>992</sup> All participants must be listeners and curious to learn from others.

Thus, communal discernment is similar to *junggringan*, as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes *kandha-takon*, and non-*guru-murid* relationships, so that all are students. In communal discernment, each individual has to be aware of the presence of the Spirit or God, while in *junggringan*, each individual should be aware of the *guru sejati* (genuine guru) which dwells in *raos*. Personal and communal discernments are spiritual practices that nurture self-knowledge and lead to a peaceful coexistence. While both *pangawikan pribadi* and *junggringan* are the practice of *olah rasa*, Endraswara stresses that *olah rasa* leads an individual to becoming a mystic through "deepening and purifying the inner being."<sup>993</sup> *Pangawikan pribadi* and *junggringan* are contemplative practices for a transformative life in which the era of *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living) will come.

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991. Liebert, *Soul of Discernment*, 42.

992. Liebert, *Soul of Discernment*, 44.

993. Endraswara, *Mistik Kejawaen*, 36.

***Sakepenake, sabutuhe, saperlune, sacukupe, samestine, lan sabenere (True Happiness: Freedom and Tranquility)***

The three essences of Javanese mysticism: *sangkan paraning dumadi* (from origin to destiny), *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being and God), and *memayu hayuning bawana* (to adorn the world), which I described above, are integral to *Kawruh Jiwa*. For the Javanese, the self is never understood without others, because the self is always a part of *cosmotheandric*: the integration between anthropos, cosmos, and theos. This integration demonstrates communal harmonious life, instead of only personal focus or individuality. When each individual practices *olah rasa* through *pangawikan pribadi* and *junggringan*, the individuals' lives lead to a new era of *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living). Ki Ageng Suryomentaram describes:

*Windu Kencana punika jaman utawi ungsum tiyang beja seserengan. Beja sesarengan punika wohipun mangetos dhateng raos sami, inggih punika tiyang kathah sami kraos mangertos weruh yen sadaya tiyang punika raosipun sami (Windu Kencana is an era or human condition where people are happy together. Being happy together is the fruit of knowing raos sami [raos of others], which is many people understanding that all people have the same raos.)*<sup>994</sup>

For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *olah rasa* leads an individual to be aware of *raos sami* which transforms social life, because “*raos sami murugaken tentrem, lajeng manahipun sugih sesarengan lan guyub*” (*raos sami* leads to tranquility, which achieves richness and harmonious unity).<sup>995</sup>

Thus, in the *Windu Kencana* era, each individual is not looking for his or her own satisfaction, but rather each individual is seeking *sakepenake, sabutuhe, saperlune, sacukupe*,

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994. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 48.

995. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 49.

*samestine, lan sabenere* (true happiness: freedom and tranquility).<sup>996</sup> This true happiness stands upon Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's thought that "*salumahing bumi sakurebing langit, lajeng mboten wonten ingkang pantes dipun enthu-enthu, dipun padosi, lan boten wonten ingkang dipun ceri-ceri dipun tampik*" (on the earth and under the sky, there is nothing to be zealously sought, and nothing to be strongly rejected).<sup>997</sup> In other words, the way of true-happiness is the way of being present and responsive in daily life.

To sum up, *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) as the mystical way of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram did not appear from a vacuum of personal and communal contexts. His peak of personal desire, which formulated "*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" (I did not see a human being), expresses Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's contemplative longing for self-authenticity. David Steindl-Rast says that peak experiences are:

moments of high intensity in which our awareness rises above its normal level. They are peaks also in the sense that they are like mere points separated by relatively long stretches of going down and of going up again, relatively short moments in time, though they might be quite frequent if we became alert to them. The term peak also applies in the sense that our contemplative moments are moments of clear vision, just as from a peak we can survey the countryside all around ... We encounter mystery ... Peak experiences are the mystical moments in everyone's life. Yes, in everyone's. Let no one say, "Me? I'm not a mystic!" A mystic is not a special kind of human being. Rather, every human being is a special kind of mystic.<sup>998</sup>

Steindl-Rast's explanation above affirms Javanese mysticism, which is rooted in ordinary life. Every person can be a mystic depending on his or her intimate presence in *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, the core of Javanese mysticism, in which each individual should seek his or her life-journey through *raos*. Only through *raos* as the inner being does an individual have the capacity for mastering the self and his or her social life.

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996. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 19.

997. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 3, 20.

998. Steindl-Rast, *Listening Heart*, 35.

In *Kawruh Jiwa*, *olah rasa*, through *pangawikan pribadi* and *junggringan*, is the way of finding the true self. The way takes place through an inward and an outward journey, both personally and communally, intertwined with lived-experiences. At this point, *Kawruh Jiwa* as self-knowledge is not an elite mystical way for certain people, but rather a possibility for anyone seeking true-happiness through *mardika* (freedom) and *tentrem* (tranquility). An individual will have true-happiness when he or she lives as a pure being or *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat lan kramat*. Finally, *Kawruh Jiwa* as a Javanese mystical way is a way of self-transcendence; it is not a doctrinal basis but rather a practical basis for working through empirical life-experience by *olah raos/rasa*.

#### Correlation of His Mystical Way and Lonergan's Notion of Self-Transcendence

As I discussed above, “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being) is the essential desire of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's true self. His princely title gave him privilege, and caused him to be ignorant of his true self as a human being. For years, through his life journey as a prince and, later, as an ordinary person, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram sought his self-authenticity, formulated through *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge). His seeking of authenticity was a process of distinction between *manungsa kramadangsa* (egoism) and *manungsa tanpa ciri* (pure being) through *olah rasa* (training of the *rasa/raos*). In light of Bernard Lonergan's thought, Michele Saracino highlights that “authenticity refers to the subject's openness to conversion.”<sup>999</sup> For Lonergan, conversion is “intensely personal, utterly intimate, still it is not so private as to be solitary. It can happen to many and *they can form community to sustain one another in their self-transformation*, and to

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999. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 78.

help one another in working out the implications, and in fulfilling *the promise of their new life*.”<sup>1000</sup> Lonergan’s notion of conversion is not only a personal process, but also transforms communal life. This matches Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s own notion, as his personal desire to understand the self, not as a prince, led him to invent *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) as a promise for a new communal life era, which is called *Windu Kencana*. Thus, authenticity is not limited as a personal matter, but has potential impact for a better communal life.

In this part, I will discuss the empirical transformation of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s self-knowledge through Bernard Lonergan’s notion of conversions: intellectual, moral, and religious. The goal of this discussion is to understand the correlation between the mystical way of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan’s notion of conversion. Both Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan focus on inquiry of the self as “*aku*” and subjective presence, respectively. Mark Miller highlights, “Conversion is *a positive change* in the orientation of one’s liberty toward better possible *choice* and *terminal values*. It causes *a radical shift* in one’s fears and desires, satisfactions and values, beliefs and scales of preference. *It frees one from inauthenticity for authenticity*.”<sup>1001</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was concerned with how to be an *aku* who had *mardika* (freedom) and *tentrem* (tranquility) in life. “*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” represented Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s inner longing for freedom and tranquility, a longing which was caused by the reality of life surrounding him, both inside and outside the *kraton*. Both Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan were grounded in critical realism, which emphasizes the objectivity of reality through seeking both meaning and value.<sup>1002</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram employed critical realism in *Kawruh Jiwa* as he argued that an “*aku*” (the self) must learn from his or her own *raos* in daily life. This practice will

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1000. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13. Emphasis added.

1001. Miller, *Quest for God*, 149. Emphasis added.

1002. See footnote 466.

lead the “*aku*” to find *ingsun sejati* (true self). Likewise, Lonergan employed critical realism in the intentional consciousness of the subject in responding to the reality of life in order to achieve self-authenticity. Conversion grounded in critical realism becomes a fundamental approach to achieve authenticity which deliberates to *manungsa tanpa ciri* and to *be in love with God*.

### ***Intellectual Conversion***

Intellectual conversion is the most basic process which pertains to self-consciousness and “a radical clarification” beyond a reality.<sup>1003</sup> John Haughey defined intellectual conversion as conversion to reality, which has a call “to be authentic by living in reality, by judging what is and being responsive to it.”<sup>1004</sup> There are three awakening moments of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s life, which led him to collect his data of sense in order to judge the meaning of his experiences. These moments led to his conversion to reality.

The first moment occurred in his family. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram experienced a deep disappointment when his grandfather, Patih Danurejo VI, passed away and was not allowed to be buried beside his wife in the royal cemetery of Kraton Yogyakarta in Imogiri, because his grandfather’s status was lower than his grandmother’s. This experience affirmed Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s critical reflection on how social status builds a strong divide, even within the family. These divides not only happened during one’s life time, but also after death. At this point, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram tried to be honest about his feeling of sadness and to understand beyond his feelings as a human.

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1003. Lonergan, *Method*, 238.

1004. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 2.

The second moment took place in the particular environment of Kraton Yogyakarta. As the fifty-fifth child of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono VII, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram saw and experienced the privilege of a noble family that influenced the relationship between *ndoro* (master) and *abdi* (servant). For him, the image of humanity deteriorated through the feudalistic lifestyle in the *kraton* between *ndoro* and *abdi* based on “the 4Ds”: “*Dangu, Dawuh, Duka, Drana*” (questioning, commanding, anger, and reward).<sup>1005</sup> The master (*ndoro*) objectified the servant (*abdi*) because the master’s status is higher, rather than living in mutual respect as human beings. Through his critical reflection, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram asked what precisely it means to be human.

The third moment occurred within society at large. During the train trip to Surakarta, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was struck by the laboring farmers in the rice fields, people who lived their lives in hardship. This brought him to have a wider critical-reflection of being a human beyond the *kraton*’s walls. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram came to question his noble birth as a prince.

These three experiences led Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to open his mind to the “existence of nonphysical realities.”<sup>1006</sup> He examined his physical status as a prince by questioning who Suryomentaram is, as “*aku*,” the authentic self. In Lonergan’s terms, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram took the data of sense of these three momentous experiences, and developed them into the data of consciousness, due to an unrestricted desire to know: “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being). This was a question about the absence of being in himself and others.

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1005. Jatman, *Psikologi Jawa*, 41.

1006. Miller, *Quest for God*, 173.



In light of Lonergan's critical realism, by being attentive and intelligent, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram criticized the reality of his surroundings by asking for the removal of his princely title, and living in the midst of society in Cilacap, Salatiga, and Yogyakarta, so demonstrating his unrestricted desire to know by self-transcendence. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, abdicating his title was the only way for "authentic experiencing, understanding, and judging."<sup>1007</sup> "*Aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*" was a critical self-knowledge that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram developed into the Javanese philosophy of life: *raos*. In other words, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram criticized the loss of *raos*, which is the core of Javanese philosophy of being. According to Lonergan, Joseph Flanagan highlights that there is a "distinction between experiencing yourself doing knowing and knowing yourself as a knower."<sup>1008</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram discovered that the Javanese were practicing *raos*, but were not knowers of *raos*, or "*durung Jawa*, not yet Javanese."<sup>1009</sup> Based on the three experiences above, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram came to the basic question of what is the reality of himself as an individual who claimed to be Javanese, but in the depth of reality was not yet Javanese. Only through the critical reality of his own experiences was Ki Ageng Suryomentaram wakened into reality. This led him to move from intellectual conversion, as conversion to reality, to moral conversion, seeking meaning or value.

### ***Moral Conversion***

Moral conversion is conversion to meaning or value as a "critical point" in the development of that person's growing autonomy. It occurs 'when the subject finds for

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1007. Miller, *Quest for God*, 173.

1008. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 131.

1009. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 138.

himself [or herself] that it is up to himself [or herself] to decide what he [or she] is to make of himself [or herself] ... the way one is forming one's self as a subject.”<sup>1010</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's request for abdication of his title as a prince and living as an ordinary person in the midst of society was a “critical point,” which led him to be an autonomous person and formed him as a subject. Abdicating his title was considered unusual by the noble family of the *kraton*, the Dutch colony, and society; however, it was the path of being reasonable for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram as he moved forward to seek what was “truly worthwhile, truly good, truly valuable” beyond his title as a prince.<sup>1011</sup> Because of his abdication, there were rumors that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram was suffering a deep depression, that he was a person with magical power, and that he was the incarnation of Diponegoro, a prince who opposed the Dutch colony during the Java War in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1012</sup> However, for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, to be an ordinary person was the only way for him to be an authentic subject.

Moral conversion as conversion to meaning is a lifelong process. For years before and after the renunciation of his title, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram sought *terminal values* through being a well-digger, a *batik* peddler, and a farmer.<sup>1013</sup> These lifestyles were self-affirmation of his desire, not on a superficial level, but rather on the basic level of seeking authenticity. Miller highlights Lonergan's thought that moral conversion is:

[A] lifelong struggle that requires multiple repetitions of such moral acts. To advance in moral conversion one must discover and resist one's biases; one must grow in knowledge of one's community and one's world; one must keep

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1010. Miller, *Quest for God*, 169.

1011. Braman, *Meaning*, 64.

1012. Sugiarto, “Ki Ageng Suryomentaram Dari Yogyakarta,” 14.

1013. Braman, *Meaning and Authenticity*, 66.

scrutinizing one's motives and scales of value; and one must remain open to the criticism and the wisdom of one's community.<sup>1014</sup>

*Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) is the *terminal value* of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, which has *raos* at its core and is the root of Javanese mystical wisdom: *sangkan paraning dumadi*, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti*, and *memayu hayuning bawana*. Based on these, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram proposes the following values for the mystical way of *Kawruh Jiwa*: *raos*: *guru sejati* (intuitive inner feeling: the genuine guru), *nyawang karep*, (observing desire), *pangawikan pribadi* (personal discernment), *junggringan* (communal discernment), and *sakepenake, sabutuhe, saperlune, sacukupe, samestine, lan sabenere* (freedom and tranquility). These values are not an abstract theory, but rather a practice in which an individual, in both personal and communal contexts, scrutinizes the “good, worthwhile, [and] truthfulness of his or her reality.”<sup>1015</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram notes that an individual must scrutinize the eleven types of notes: “*raja darbe* (wealth), *kahormatan* (honor), *panguwasa* (power), *kulawarga* (family), *bangsa* (nationality), *jinis* (type), *kapinteran* (talent), *kabatinan* (mysticism), *kawruh* (knowledge), *raos gesang* (sense of life).”<sup>1016</sup> Scrutinizing is important for an individual to discover what is truly good, truly worthwhile, and truly valuable, because it is easy to become trapped in *kramadangsa*, which causes egoism and self-centeredness. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram stresses that *Kawruh Jiwa* is a self-critical reflection based on praxis through “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” (learning one's own *raos*).<sup>1017</sup> The result of moral conversion in *Kawruh Jiwa*, as conversion to meaning, is for the subjective being to achieve *mardika* (freedom) and *tentrem* (tranquility). Freedom and tranquility of the self mean an

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1014. Miller, *Quest for God*, 170. See also, Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

1015. Braman, *Meaning*, 66.

1016. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 110-13.

1017. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 1.

individual will not become an egoistic or self-centered person but, based on his or her liberation and tranquility, will positively influence communal life.

*Kawruh Jiwa*, as the *terminal value*, has two emphases on mastery of self and mastery of social life, both of which are integrated in Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's proposal of *raos sami* (*raos* of other). This is in line with the basic idea of moral conversion as conversion to meaning or value, as Brian Braman highlights, "Moral conversion is the *inner transformation of the person* that flows out to effect an *outer transformation to the world*."<sup>1018</sup> In other words, there is no communal transformation without personal transformation. There is sharing and constructing values for both personal and communal life. Michael McCarthy highlights, "Lonergan bases his existential and social ethics on the existential priority of moral conversion on our personal and communal commitment to actualizing all that is really worthwhile."<sup>1019</sup> Lonergan's moral conversion, as Braman and McCarthy highlighted, is in line with Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's inner transformation to construct social transformation that will lead to the beginning of the *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living) era, in which people will live in "*guyup*" (harmony), "*tentrem*" (tranquility), and "*seneng sesarengan*" (happiness together).<sup>1020</sup> This affirms that moral conversion finds true value rather than one's self-satisfaction or self-centeredness.

### ***Religious Conversion***

Religious conversion is conversion to love, such as when Lonergan uses the phrase *being in love with God*. Lonergan stresses that religious conversion leads an individual to "a

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1018. Braman, *Meaning*, 67. Emphasis added.

1019. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 45.

1020. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 51.

total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth in the realization of human values, or in the orientation man [or woman] adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal.”<sup>1021</sup> Through religious conversion, love manifests concretely in human life beyond the self in order to reach others. Braman highlights that *being-in-love with God* will “bring us to a new level of understanding of values.”<sup>1022</sup> In *Kawruh Jiwa*, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram emphasizes the decision to choose not *manungsa kramadangsa*, but rather *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power) as a new value of being in which self-transcendence becomes the ground and the goal of life. In light of Lonergan’s thought of conversion, *manungsa tanpa ciri* is an “ontic,” which refers to the entity of being as the self, dealing with values, character, and relationships, due to a life transformation.<sup>1023</sup> *Manungsa tanpa ciri* creates liberation and tranquility in both personal and communal life, because it focuses not on an individual’s traits but on communal well-being.

Both Prihartanti and Sugiarto mention that *manungsa tanpa ciri* performs “altruistic personality” through *olah rasa*.<sup>1024</sup> Etymologically, altruism is rooted in the Latin *alter* (other) and was named by August Comte in the 1830s. Comte defines altruism as “the elimination of selfish desire and of egocentrism, as well as leading a life devoted to the well-being of others.”<sup>1025</sup> The idea of altruism has a long history, such as in Aristotle’s altruism, or human friendship, which emphasizes that “the other person is another self because *my true*

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1021. Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

1022. Braman, *Meaning*, 67.

1023. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13.

1024. Sugiarto, *Psikologi Raos*, 109. See also, Prihartanti, *Kepribadian Sehat Menurut Konsep Suryomentaram*, 38. Neither Prihartanti nor Sugiarto explain altruism.

1025. Matthieu Richard, *Altruism: The Power of Compassion to Change Yourself and the World* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2013), 16.

*self and your self ultimately are one and the same*, which is the presence of love for rationality present in each other human being.”<sup>1026</sup> In the Greco-Roman traditions, altruism is considered in the idea of *philia* or friendship, which covers “every type of attachment from kinship relations to membership in a *polis* ... [the word friendship] is generally in connection with the word *arête*—which translates as any excellence and, later, as *virtue*.”<sup>1027</sup> These historical backgrounds recognize that altruism plays a foundational role in social life because “*without friendship there is no justice* ... friendship is the sharing of all in the common project of creating and sustaining the life of the *polis* ... friendship involves affection. Such affection arises within a relationship defined in terms of a common allegiance to and a common pursuit of goods.”<sup>1028</sup> Thus, friendship is not limited to an exclusive person-to-person relationship as the modern reader may understand, but rather friendship establishes inclusive commitment within society to achieve goodness and happiness in communal life. This meaning of altruism or human friendship acknowledges the correlation between Ki Ageng Suryomentaram on *raos sami* (*raos* of other) and Lonergan on fellow-feeling or intersubjectivity. As I described in Chapter 3, Aristotle’s idea of mutual love or friendship influenced Lonergan’s thought on “benevolence and beneficence” as two key terms of self-transcendence.<sup>1029</sup> Haughey highlights that “friendship is the stuff of both moral and affective [religious] conversion.”<sup>1030</sup> Haughey refers back to Plato and Aristotle’s idea of friendship, which is “a call to wisdom and beauty” and “a way of coming to know the good in greater

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1026. Robert M. Berchman, “Altruism in Greco-Roman Philosophy,” in *Altruism in World Religions*, ed. Jacob Neusner and Bruce Chilton (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 2. Emphasis added.

1027. Berchman, “Altruism in Greco-Roman Philosophy,” 3.

1028. Berchman, “Altruism in Greco-Roman Philosophy,” 5. Emphasis added.

1029. Lonergan, *Method*, 35.

1030. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 6.

depth and committing to it,” respectively.<sup>1031</sup> On this point, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan are both concerned with the universal and inclusive value of friendship for community building.

With *raos* as the core of *Kawruh Jiwa*, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram focuses on not only personal but also communal matters. The insight of *raos* is compassion for humanity. Based on the historical context of his life, Indonesia having been colonized by the Dutch, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram said, “*Yen kita sampun resik saking raos-raos jajahan, lajeng kita sadeg mbangun Negara tanpa gangguan saking ing lebet, saking raosipun piyambak*” (If we do not have *raos* to remain colonized, then we are able to build our country without any inner disruptions, from our own *raos*).<sup>1032</sup> Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s idea of building a liberated country through *olah rasa* is in line with the idea of building *polis* in Aristotle’s altruism. The goal of *Kawruh Jiwa* is building the social life of *Windu Kencana*. This is rooted in the Javanese philosophy of *memayu hayuning bawana* (to adorn the world) as the process to accomplish a peaceful existence.

*Manungsa tanpa ciri* as the self-transcendence of *Kawruh Jiwa* is not a state of being that happens only once, but rather *manungsa tanpa ciri* is a lifelong process during *sangkan paraning dumadi* (from origin to destiny). This is in line with Lonergan, as Miller highlights:

[R]eligious conversion is not simply a single moment; *it is a lifelong, precarious process* ... the human subject in this life, even those religiously converted, are *always “pilgrim,”* ever “on the way.” Although one may have already become in some measure a being-in-love, one can always discover further depths to love, and there remains the need to make one’s knowing and doing conform to one’s loving.<sup>1033</sup>

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1031. Haughey, “Three Conversions,” 6.

1032. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 4, ed. Ki Grangsang Suryomentaram (Jakarta: CV. Haji MasAgung, 1993), 133. Emphasis added.

1033. Miller, *Quest for God*, 158. Emphasis added.

The goal of religious conversion for Lonergan, as well as Ki Ageng Suryomentaram with *manungsa tanpa ciri*, is for a better daily life in the here and now. Referring to the Javanese mystical way of Bratakesawa, as I described above, in religious conversion an individual reaches the fifth level of *mulat sarira*. *Mulat sarira* pinpoints the capacity of self-transcendence through *olah rasa* to which an individual can go beyond himself or herself to reach others for peaceful living as a society. *Mulat sarira* is in line with Lonergan's emphasis on self-transcendence as the human achievement of self-authenticity. *Mulat sarira*, like self-transcendence, has the capability to allow an individual to progress further in love and in being a *being in love with God*, as a continual process for betterment of personal and communal relationships. Religious conversion requires an individual to be responsible for others, which leads to self-transcendence.

The Javanese mysticism of *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* "stands as the model for relationship between man [and woman] and society" that is demonstrated in *manungsa tanpa ciri* as the radical self-existence that creates *rukun* (harmonious unity).<sup>1034</sup> In *manungsa tanpa ciri*, there is the experience of God because God as *guru sejati* (the genuine *guru*) dwells in *raos*. Both Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's *manungsa tanpa ciri* and Lonergan's *being in love with God* have divine influence. McCarthy highlights, "By nature, we have an *eros* for union with God; through divine grace we can fall in love with God in an unrestricted manner. The interior gift of God's love, freely given to all, is a *supernatural* principle consciously operating within life of the incarnate subject."<sup>1035</sup> McCarthy highlights that in operative grace, there are both divine and human aspects, and both aspects are united and operate the self as a subjective presence who is *being in love with God*. This is in line with the idea of

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1034. Mulder, *Mysticism & Everyday Life*, 38.

1035. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 47.



*sejatining raos* (genuine *raos*), which comes from God and unifies with *batin* (inner-self). For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, to be *manungsa tanpa ciri* is a fulfilment of his desire “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*,” with the existence of the self or “*aku*” as the subject. McCarthy highlights that *being in love with God* is “the transcendental desire of the subject, its unrestricted longing for knowledge and value.”<sup>1036</sup> Both *manungsa tanpa ciri* and *being in love with God* underline a wholehearted or totality of love for humanity. Lonergan stresses that religious conversion “is not just a state of mind and heart. Essential to it is an intersubjective, interpersonal component.”<sup>1037</sup> Lonergan goes on to highlight that being-in-love must be concrete and in relationship with others.

Thus, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram achieves his authenticity in self-transcendence by being *manungsa tanpa ciri* (pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power). Similar to Lonergan’s intellectual, moral, and religious conversions, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram proposes *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) for true happiness through being aware of *raos sami* (*raos* of others). For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, to realize true happiness personally and communally, an individual must, by practicing *olah rasa*, discern his or her *raos* through the intentional consciousness levels (experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding) and the threefold conversion (intellectual, moral, and religious). Braman highlights that “only in conversion does the person confront his or her inability to sustain personal and communal development. It is this threefold conversion that opens the subject up most fully as a human being.”<sup>1038</sup> Through the threefold conversion, a person discerns and makes the correct decision to choose *manungsa tanpa ciri* instead of *manungsa kramadangsa*. The self

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1036. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 47.

1037. Lonergan, *Method*, 327.

1038. Braman, *Meaning*, 70-71.

determines with perpetual questions surrounding the tension between *manungsa kramadangsa*, as inauthenticity, and *manungsa tanpa ciri*, as authenticity of the self.

Finally, conversion is more than a personal change of horizon. It is the development of a new way of relating to others based on authentic subjectivity, and it comes through the work of the four dimensions of *Kawruh Jiwa* and the work of Lonergan's three conversions, which occur "within *a single consciousness*, to conceive their relations in terms of sublation" due to self-transcendence as *sejatining gesang* (the genuineness of life).<sup>1039</sup> In the Javanese philosophy of life, *sejatining gesang* is not a peak stage of life, but rather an ongoing process of seeking self-knowledge and reflecting on life's experience as the source of wisdom for living peacefully here and now, as "*urip kuwi mung mampir ngombe*" (life is like a pause to have a drink).

## Conclusion

In summary, as I quoted in the introduction of this chapter, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram describes,

*Sarehne kawruh jiwa punika kawruh raos, mila sinau kawruh jiwa punika sinau raosipun piyambak. Raosipun piyambak punika awakipun piyambak. Mila meruhi raosipun piyambak punika meruhi awakipun piyambak.* (Because *kawruh jiwa* is *kawruh raos*, learning *kawruh jiwa* is learning one's own *raos*. One's own *raos* is the self itself. Knowing one's own *raos* is knowing oneself.)<sup>1040</sup>

By emphasizing *sinau raosipun piyambak* (learning one's own *raos*), Ki Ageng Suryomentaram pinpoints critical interiority as the fundamental work of *Kawruh Jiwa*. The critical interiority understood through *olah raos/rasa* is the path which leads to self-

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1039. Lonergan, *Method*, 241. Emphasis added.

1040. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 1.

transcendence, because the Javanese term “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” occurs not only in the cognitive dimension, but also in the affective dimension of a person. The practice of “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” influences an individual in both personal and communal relationships. This is in line with Lonergan’s emphasis on “the self as knower”<sup>1041</sup> through the intentional consciousness toward the reality of life. James Robertson Prince III highlights,

[T]he appropriation of oneself as conscious is the first step toward the critical understanding of Lonergan’s position on *mystical consciousness*. For mystical consciousness is a consciousness of vital intersubjectivity, and if one can appreciate the subject-as-subject, one is in a position to move the second step, *an appreciation of subjects-as-vitality-intersubjective . . .* In vital intersubjectivity, *there is no object; the union is one of two subject-as subjects*. It is not by sharing a common object, but by *sharing a common consciousness*, that the two become one.<sup>1042</sup>

For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” leads to an understanding of *raos sami* (*raos* of other) in which sharing consciousness occurs in the role of appreciating subject-as-subject based on the awareness that each individual has the same *raos* as another. In other words, an individual who “*sinau raosipun piyambak*” will transcend to *raos sami* when his or her critical interiority develops intersubjectivity within social life. The realization of intersubjectivity will be the presence of the *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living) era, in which people will live in harmony, tranquility, and happiness together. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan emphasize the role of interiority of the self through *raos* or consciousness within social transformation.

In light of mysticism, self-transcendence of Lonergan’s *being in love with God* and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s *manungsa tanpa ciri* are mystical consciousness as “the

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1041. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 131.

1042. James Robertson Price, III, “Lonergan and the Foundation of a Contemporary Mystical Theology,” in *Lonergan Workshop* Volume V, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chico, CA: Scholar Press, 1985), 186. Emphasis added.

prolongation of ordinary consciousness.”<sup>1043</sup> Self-transcendence is a mystical way in ordinary life based on the true self embracing others with benevolence and beneficence. Even though Ki Ageng Suryomentaram left the *kraton*, he did not live as an ascetic. Rather, he and his family lived as ordinary people in the midst of society. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram clearly explained that *manungsa tanpa ciri* is an applicable practice in relationships: marital,<sup>1044</sup> parental,<sup>1045</sup> neighborly,<sup>1046</sup> and national.<sup>1047</sup> Smith stresses that the “flooding of the mystic’s soul with the Divine Life must mean a fuller, richer life lived in contact with other human lives. ‘The perfect life’ said Plato, ‘would be a life of perfect communion with other souls, as well as with the Soul which animates the universe.’”<sup>1048</sup> Evelyn Underhill points out, “To be a mystic is simply to participate here and now in real and eternal life, in the fullest, deepest sense which is possible to man [and woman].”<sup>1049</sup> In light of Underhill’s and Smith’s thoughts, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram is defined as a mystic, as he lived in the midst of society. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram invented *Kawruh Jiwa* as a mystical way accessible to the larger society.

Ki Ageng Suryomentaram firmly highlights that self-transcendence is a lifelong process during *sangkan paraning dumadi* (the origin and destiny), which means that self-

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1043. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 124.

1044. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 63-111.

1045. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 110.

1046. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 14-20

1047. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 4, 106-35.

1048. Smith, “Nature and Meaning of Mysticism,” 14.

1049. Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Spiritual Consciousness* (1911; rep., Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2016), 447.

transcendence is about the empirical experience of the self. Self-transcendence requires conversion, as Lonergan says:

It [conversion] is not merely a change or even a development; rather it is *a radical transformation* on which follows, on all levels of living, an interlocked series of changes and developments ... So a great change in one's apprehensions and one's values accompanies no less a change in oneself, in one's relations to other persons, and in one's relation to God.<sup>1050</sup>

Ki Ageng Suryomentaran's *manungsa tanpa ciri* and Lonergan's *being in love with God* need an individual radical transformation as the capacity for self-transcendence. Even though Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and Lonergan come from two different traditions (*Kejawen* and Christianity, respectively), they have similar emphases on critical realism through self-interiority instead of religious doctrine for building peace through self-transcendence in the world.

“*Raosipun piyambak punika wonten ing raosipun piyambak lan raosipun sanes punika ugi wonten ing raosipun piyambak. Dados raosing tiyang punika isi raosipun piyambak lan raosipun sanes* (The person's *raos* is in the self's *raos*, and others' *raos* is also in the self's *raos*. Thus, human *raos* contains the person's *raos* and others' *raos*.)”<sup>1051</sup>  
- Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

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1050. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13. Emphasis added.

1051. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 2, 9.

## CHAPTER 6

### **The Intersection of the Mystical Ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, Using the Lens of Lonergan's Notion of Self-Transcendence, and Its Contribution to Interspirituality in Indonesia**

#### Introduction

“All are called to be loved and to love. Only through love can we transcend the little ego, thus becoming fully human and fully authentic. And this radical love leads to the sublime wisdom that we call mysticism. How extraordinary! Lonergan, probably unconsciously, calls not only for a mystical Christianity but also for a mystical world.”<sup>1052</sup>

- William Johnston

In the two previous chapters, I discussed separately the intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram with Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence. In this chapter, I will discuss the intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram using the lens of Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence as the fulfilment of human authenticity. I have constructed this chapter in three sections. In the first section, I will apply Bernard Lonergan's notion of conversions (intellectual, moral, and religious) to Daniel Schipani's *ecology of the self* (vision, virtue, and vocation) as the tapestry of self-transcendence. The self, as the holistic existence of being, plays the role of contemporary mystical spirituality. This point of view is the basis of self-transcendence as the mystical consciousness of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. In the second section, I will explore the unique human authenticity of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in light of *being in love with God*, which has

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1052. Johnston, “*Arise, My Love ...*,” 214-5.

three dimensions: the self, other selves, and God. In the third section, I will explore how Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence becomes the foundation of Teasdale's notion of interspirituality. Self-transcendence is mystical consciousness, and the intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram becomes a model for interspirituality. Finally, I will propose the contribution of interspirituality for Indonesia as a pluralistic country, in order to be a peaceful home for all people.

### *Ecology of the Self as the Tapestry of Self-Transcendence in the Mystical Ways of*

Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

#### ***The Role Played by the Self in Mystical Life***

In the modern era, mysticism is more inclusive, more positive, and more active than before, especially in perspectives on the existence and the role of the self. The self is seen as a holistic existence of body, mind, and soul in engagement with the world. Richard Woods states that in contemporary mystical spirituality, being a mystic requires *the totality of the self*; the body cannot be ignored and “the mind can no longer be considered as inimical to the life of the spirit.”<sup>1053</sup> The modern era offers a new perspective on mysticism in the midst of common misconceptions about it, such as affiliation with the occult, unusual and weird phenomena, abnormal psychology, preference for “elite” people, withdrawal from the world and antisocial lifestyles.<sup>1054</sup> Mysticism is active rather than passive, and mysticism uses the prophetic voice as an agent of social change.

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1053. Richard Woods, *Mysterion: An Approach to Mystical Spirituality* (Chicago: The Thomas More Press, 1981), 61.

1054. Woods, *Mysterion*, 19-20.

Due to social transformation, the mystic is a “realistic and stern [critic] of the status quo” through not only words or actions, but also one’s whole being.<sup>1055</sup> The role played by the mystic leads to a new understanding of what mysticism is, as Bernard McGinn states that “*mysticism* (as the mystics have insisted) is more than a matter of unusual sensations, but essentially comprises *new ways of knowing and loving* based on states of awareness in which God becomes present in our inner acts, not as an object to be grasped, but as the direct and transforming center of life.”<sup>1056</sup> Mysticism as a way of knowing and loving requires “mediated immediacy” as the way of seeing and perceiving the world, with the mystic being attentive in his or her experiences through mystical consciousness.<sup>1057</sup> In other words, mysticism is not an exceptional event, but rather an ordinary event which becomes extraordinary because of the way of the self uses the experience to learn how to know and love. According to Lonergan, *the self* becomes *a knower* and *a lover* through concrete action. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, as modern mystics who are knowers and lovers, appreciate the self as a holistic being. For Mother Teresa, the core of the Missionaries of Charity’s vocation is to fulfil the basic needs of the poor. The self of the poorest of the poor is a precious human being. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, the self with a low social and economic status, such as the *abdi dalem* (the servant of the *kraton*) and the laboring farmers in the rice fields, has to be respected beyond his or her status. The self should be understood in light of *raos*, which refers to the holistic being of a human in which cognition and inner feeling are intertwined.

In the modern era, the self takes precedence as the core of mystical life, as Thomas Merton uses the term the “inner self” to refer not to an object or a thing, but rather to “a new

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1055. Woods, *Mysterion*, 60.

1056. McGinn, *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, xvi. Emphasis added.

1057. McGinn, *Essential Writings of Christian Mysticism*, xvii.



and indefinable quality of our living being.”<sup>1058</sup> The quality of living being does not refer to the individual elitism of the mystic, but rather to the quality of the mystic as a living being in communal life. Merton affirms:

[N]o man [or woman] could arrive at a genuine inner self-realization unless he [or she] had first become aware of himself [or herself] as a member of a group—as an “I” confronted with a “Thou” who completes and fulfills his [or her] own being. In other words, the inner self sees the other not as a limitation upon itself, but as its complement, its “other self,” and is even in a certain sense identified with that other, so that the two “are one.” This unity in love is one of the most characteristic works of the inner self, so that paradoxically the inner “I” is not only isolated but at the same time united with others on a higher plane, which is fact the planet of spiritual solitude.<sup>1059</sup>

Being a mystic is about awakening the self to a deep concern for others, because the mystic sees himself or herself in relationship with others. In line with Merton, Lonergan emphasizes intersubjectivity, because the authenticity of the self is always in relation to others in communal life. Intersubjectivity concerns self-surrender, in which feelings are used to communicate with others, rather than power and egoism. The unification of the self and the other selves occurs in each individual’s inner self as a mystical contemplation in ordinary life. These contemplations often take place while the self simultaneously occupies two states of being; the self is in a communal situation, surrounded by other people, while the inner self is engaged in solitary contemplation. Both Mother Teresa’s desire “I thirst” and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s desire to move beyond “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being) are the result of their own contemplation in such solitary moments. Merton adds that “contemplation is not enjoyment, not pleasure, not happiness, not peace, but the transcendent experience of reality and truth in the act of a supreme and liberated spiritual

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1058. Merton, *The Inner Experience: Notes on Contemplation*, ed. William H. Shannon (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003), 6.

1059. Merton, *Inner Experience*, 21-22.

love ... not gratification and rest, but awareness, life, creativity, and freedom.”<sup>1060</sup> This kind of contemplation led to similar awakenings in both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram:

<b>Mother Teresa</b>	<b>Ki Ageng Suryomentaram</b>
Leaving the Loreto convent	Leaving Kraton Yogyakarta
Setting aside her Loreto’s habit	Setting aside his princely clothes
Wearing the cheapest sari	Wearing ordinary clothes
Maintaining use of the symbol of the cross	Maintaining use of the batik symbol of <i>parang barong</i>

These similar actions demonstrate the revolutionary inner selves of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in their seeking a sense of humanity previously lost. Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram can be categorized as active mystics, based on their mystical contemplation and transformative services in society. Deyoung proposes that active mystics “must have ongoing relationships with many persons from marginalized communities.”<sup>1061</sup> Leaving the Loreto convent was the way to satisfy the thirst of the poor, and leaving Kraton Yogyakarta was the way to *mangertos raos* (to understand and to contemplate the *raos* of others through experience) for Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, respectively. In light of their radical self-surrender, Mother Teresa proclaimed that her true community was the poor by living in deep poverty, while Ki Ageng Suryomentaram became an ordinary person by choosing the life of a well-digger, farmer, and *batik* peddler. These examples demonstrate their desire for self-transcendence and building a new relationship with others in the role of subject to subject, instead of subject to object. The mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are grounded in Lonergan’s transcending self through the transcendental precepts of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, which

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1060. Merton, *Inner Experience*, 34.

1061. Deyoung, *Living Faith*, 100.

led to mystical consciousness as “prolongation of ordinary consciousness” in daily life.<sup>1062</sup>

Roy describes,

[O]rdinary consciousness is horizontal; it consists in a presence to the world and the self. Mystical consciousness is vertical; it finds the Mystery in the depths of the self. Because one is horizontal and the other vertical, these two kinds of consciousness, far from being in competition, may coexist and even intermingle. Mystical consciousness enters ordinary consciousness, sometimes causing interference, but usually enriching it. Mystical consciousness gives ordinary consciousness a special quality: stillness, patience, a renewed ability to listen and to love the other, an enhanced dynamism for the pursuit of objectives that are in line with God’s will.<sup>1063</sup>

The intersection between ordinary consciousness and mystical consciousness leads the self to being a mystic. In other words, mystical life is available to everyone, and it occurs when the self is fully engaged in his or her particular context, as can be seen with Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Mother Teresa’s mystical consciousness is rooted in the thirst of Jesus on the cross, while Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s mystical consciousness is rooted in *raos* in which *guru sejati* (the genuine *guru*) dwells. Thus, the self “enters a mystical life that is in continuity with the life of contemplation but goes far beyond. Now [the self] sees God in all things and all things in God.”<sup>1064</sup> This entry leads the self, as a holistic subject, to being attentively present in his or her experience. The mystical consciousness of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram shows the possibility for mystics from different religious and cultural backgrounds to transcend their selves in the midst of society. Self-transcendence is about mystical consciousness, in which the self has a capacity for transforming from personal consciousness to social consciousness within daily life. Thus, mystical consciousness is available to everyone for achieving self-transcendence as a mystical way.

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1062. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 124.

1063. Roy, *Engaging the Thought of Bernard Lonergan*, 150.

1064. Johnston, “*Arise, My Love ...*,” 108.

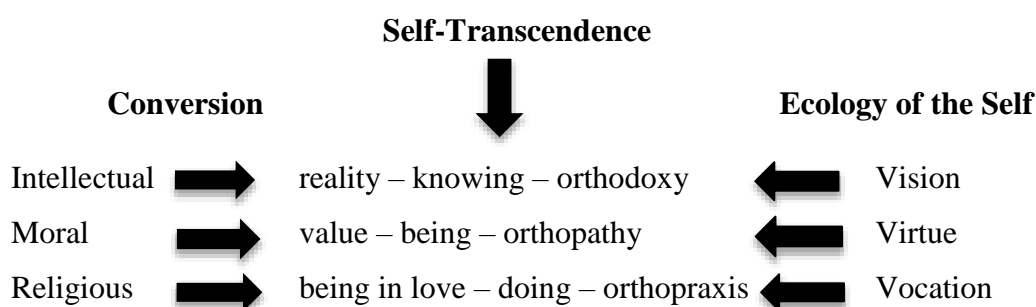
## *Ecology of the Self*

To explain the concept of self-transcendence as a mystical way for everyone, I will develop Schipani's idea of the *ecology of the self*,<sup>1065</sup> which refers to a holistic system of the interconnectedness of "vision, virtue and vocation."<sup>1066</sup> I propose *ecology of the self* as the tapestry of self-transcendence. The term "tapestry" implies interconnectedness, as a tapestry has a combination of colorful cottons woven together. Likewise, *ecology of the self*, which refers to the interconnectedness of vision, virtue, and vocation, is the tapestry of self-transcendence as *a universal mystical way* becomes more concrete. In light of Lonergan's notion of conversion, intellectual conversion, which focuses on being attentive to reality, leads the self to have clearer vision, because vision is not only seeing but also knowing. Moral conversion, which focuses on value or meaning, leads the self to acquire it because virtue points to a model of being. Religious conversion, which focuses on an individual's capacity to love, leads to transform value into a vocation of steadfast love. There are parallel processes between the *ecology of the self* and conversion, which emphasize interconnectedness and sublation, respectively. Drawing on interconnectedness of the *ecology of the self* adds practicality to self-transcendence:

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1065. I credit this term to Daniel S. Schipani, "Christian Formation Seminar" (lecture, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN, Fall Semester 1999). See Daniel S. Schipani, "The Purpose of Ministry: Human Emergence in the Light of Jesus Christ" (lecture, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN, Fall Semester 1999), 20. For Schipani, *ecology of the self* refers to the self as a holistic system of three interconnected dimensions: vision, virtue, and vocation.

1066. Daniel S. Schipani, "Epilogue: Competencies for wise interfaith spiritual care," in *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, ed. Daniel S. Schipani (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2013), 149-166. Schipani does not talk about the interconnectedness of vision, virtue, and vocation within self-transcendence, but rather within interfaith spiritual care.



The parallel between conversion and *ecology of the self* is an ongoing process of self-transcendence which refers to “the wonder of the authentic subject [as] not intent on proving an already assumed idea, but rather being open to the unknown.”<sup>1067</sup> For Lonergan, being open to the unknown is an essential part of the “radical transformation” of conversion that implies the change and development of the self, connected with the dynamic of his or her lived experience.<sup>1068</sup> In line with Lonergan, Schipani stresses that the *ecology of the self* points to a “*formation* process,” which emphasizes both growth and maturity of life, and a “*transformation* process,” which emphasizes both radical change and crises that are characterized as “*conversion*.”<sup>1069</sup> Schipani argues that in light of spirituality and the human spirit, *ecology of the self* is a “call for *good*, *true*, and *right* qualities” as competencies of “*orthodoxy*” (true knowledge), “*orthopathy*” (good heart and genuine presence), and “*orthopraxis*” (right action), point to vision, virtue, and vocation, respectively.<sup>1070</sup> The interconnectedness and intentionality of the three *ortho* are similar to Lonergan’s statement that the fullness of self-transcendence “is not only merely knowing but also doing.”<sup>1071</sup> Thus,

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1067. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 75.

1068. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 13.

1069. Schipani, “Purpose of Ministry,” 14.

1070. Schipani, “Epilogue,” 169-70.

1071. Lonergan, *Method*, 37.

formation and transformation of the self lead to a new life, personally and communally, through benevolence and beneficence.

In the context of Indonesia as a pluralistic country within a complexity of religious pluralism, as I described in Chapter 1, the term “*ecology of the self*” is a less sensitive term than the term “conversion.” People can easily become prejudiced and misunderstand the term “conversion,” which connotes conversion from one religion or indigenous belief to another. However, the term *ecology of the self* with its three dimensions—vision, virtue, and vocation—is more universal, through its conceptualizing of “*human spirit* inclusively.”<sup>1072</sup> The use of *ecology of the self* does not reduce the essence of Lonergan’s notion of conversion since self-transcendence is transcultural and trans-religious.<sup>1073</sup> Surely, the notion of self-transcendence for interspirituality goes beyond religious and cultural symbols and traditions. Self-transcendence focuses on the self as the subject without any recognition or labels, and instead pinpoints the true self.

## Vision

The term “vision” can have a variety of meanings, but vision as the first dimension of *ecology of the self* implies

[W]ays of seeing and knowing reality, both self and world. Fundamentally, it names the need and potential for deep perception and meaning. Growth in Vision necessitates deepening dispositions and behaviors such as heightened awareness; attentiveness; admiration and contemplation; critical thinking; creative imagination; and moral and spiritual discernment.<sup>1074</sup>

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1072. Schipani, “Epilogue,” 169.

1073. Lonergan, *Method*, 281-5; Snedden, *Eros of the Human Spirit*, 152.

1074. Daniel S. Schipani, “The Heart of the Matter: Engaging the *Spirit* in Spiritual Care,” in *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, ed. Daniel S. Schipani (Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2013), 160.

Vision does not come from an illusion of the self, or an inspiration from a vacuum, or a revelation from the “other world.” Rather, vision is the way of the self to see, which points to the physical eyes, and to know, which points to the insight of the self and the self’s understanding. Vision is a way for the self to engage with the world and be grounded in the reality of life. It is not enough for the self to use only his or her ocular vision. Vision requires the self to be attentive, with critical thinking by questioning what is seen. Critical thinking becomes the basis for judging what is really known, and seeking meaning and value. On this point, the ways of seeing and knowing transform the self, as the self is not the same after the vision.

The concept of vision is in line with Lonergan’s intellectual conversion which focuses on how the self deals with reality. Reality is not something already there which the self sees; instead, the self has to engage in critical realism to reach objectivity. To be a visionary or a knower, in Lonergan’s terms, the self’s vision is not “the world of immediacy” like an infant’s vision, but rather the self’s vision is “the world mediated by meaning.”<sup>1075</sup> As Schipani says, to grow in vision, the self needs “heightened awareness” or intentional consciousness.<sup>1076</sup> Vision requires a quality of consciousness in the self’s self-inquiry to reality, which leads the self to move “from experiencing to inquiring-into-experience.”<sup>1077</sup> Through vision, the self more deeply enters the reality of life and tries to engage others as part of his or her communal life. In other words, there is a transformational vision from personal to communal, as seen with Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and their vision of the poorest of the poor and of *raos sami* (*raos* of others), respectively. The objectivity of personal vision becomes the basic foundation for self-transcendence. Through

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1075. Lonergan, *Method*, 238.

1076. Schipani, “Heart of the Matter,” 160.

1077. Finnegan, *Audacity of Spirit*, 369.

vision, the self has a “double awareness ... an attentive awareness of [the subject’s] activity of seeing and of the subject who does the seeing.”<sup>1078</sup> This is what Lonergan states when he says that consciousness is not perception but subjective presence. The double awareness establishes vision not as a visualization of a thing, but rather the self as manifested in the vision. The Missionaries of Charity and *Kawruh Jiwa*, then, are the visions in which Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are manifested, respectively. Mother Teresa’s vision of the Missionaries of Charity is not about an institution of social work, but rather about love. Likewise, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s vision of *Kawruh Jiwa* is not a matter of teaching about good and bad (*dede wulangan awon sae*), but rather a matter of teaching *raos* as the totality of being. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are inseparable from their visions.

In light of spirituality as the human capacity for self-transcendence, vision takes a key role in spirituality as spirituality refers to lived experience. The starting point of spirituality is not a religious formulation or doctrine, but the lived experience of the self. Lived experience creates authentic spirituality, which is grounded in the concreteness of reality through vision. Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, who have different lived experiences, come to the intersection of one vision: humanity. Lived experience contributes to spirituality, which becomes authentic and contextual based on time, place, and personal and communal elements. Having the same vision of humanity opens spirituality as a way of life for the self to step beyond a variety of boundaries, including doctrine. Lived experience unites people from different backgrounds to experience the same spirituality through the capacity of self-transcendence. Vision of humanity affirms that “*spirituality is not an esoteric*, separate, or special part of human activity. It is not reserved for some chosen few or practiced only in

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1078. Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*, 133.



church, synagogue, ashram, or mosque or only during meditation times ... But ... *spirituality* [is] referring to a lived reality.”<sup>1079</sup> Thus, spirituality is not a set of doctrines or a list of religious practices, but rather a commitment to facing the reality of life that leads the self to have a vision of humanity. This vision of humanity affirms that a mystic is not withdrawn from the world, but rather enters it, as Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram did. Their visions of humanity conceived virtues, and what the good and the truth are, as standpoints for action.

## Virtue

The second dimension of *ecology of the self* is virtue which connotes

ways of being and loving; fundamentally, it is existential connectedness, or being in communion grounded in love and community. Growth in virtue may be viewed as requiring a process of formation and transformation shaping one’s inmost affections and passions, dispositions, and attitudes (i.e. “habits of the heart”).<sup>1080</sup>

Virtue (*arête*) refers to an excellence of quality of personal being in the context of communal living (*polis* or city, state). “Who am I?” is an existential personal question in the social framework or in the existential connectedness with others. Virtue as the excellence of quality has a universal truth that is “applicable to *human life in general*.”<sup>1081</sup> The objectivity of virtue is tested by love and community bases through the actualization of good within relationships. For Aristotle, virtue referred to friendship, in which “affection arises within a relationship

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1079. Helminiak, *Human Core of Spirituality*, 34-35. The first italics are added.

1080. Schipani, “Heart of the Matter,” 160.

1081. Brad J. Kallenberg, “The Master Argument of McIntyre’s *After Virtue*,” in *Virtue*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (New York: Paulist Press 2011), 30.

defined in terms of common allegiance to and a common pursuit of goods.”<sup>1082</sup> In other words, virtue is embedded in one’s life and manifested into one’s way of being.

Virtue is grounded in value and how a subject searches “not for the merely apparent good, but for the true good.”<sup>1083</sup> Individuals have to choose true good as a terminal value, which leads them to be “authentic persons achieving self-transcendence by their good choices.”<sup>1084</sup> Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram chose their terminal values from two different religious or belief traditions and two different cultures. Of course, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram had their own individual formula, emphasis, and action, but they also had the same concern and commitment for what is truly good, truly valuable, and truly worthwhile for humanity. In other words, self-transcendence cannot be realized without virtue as the foundation, because, as Lonergan affirms, the authenticity of the self requires one “to grow in *sensitivity* and *responsiveness* to the values.”<sup>1085</sup> Growing in sensitivity and responsiveness to the values is a lifelong journey for mystics like Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Sensitivity and responsiveness relate to interpersonal engagement, which points to *orthopathos* as “an interlocutor [which] seeks to or links us in community with those who suffer.”<sup>1086</sup> This is the substance of virtue as a way of being and loving.

As I described in Chapter 2, spirituality is about life integration or living publicly. This makes virtue the fundamental basis of authentic spirituality in dealing with others. In authentic spirituality there is no narcissistic-self in the personal and communal domains, there

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1082. Kallenberg, “Master Argument,” 34.

1083. Lonergan, *Method*, 50.

1084. Lonergan, *Method*, 51.

1085. Lonergan, *Method*, 51. Emphasis added.

1086. Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation*, 37.

is only the value of humanity for self-transcendence. Since spirituality is the capacity of self-transcendence and does not have a doctrinal emphasis, the value of humanity becomes the *truthful truth* as the basis of being and loving in the pluralistic world. Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram held the same virtue, and their own religious or belief traditions and cultures are grounded in the *truthful truth* of humanity.

## Vocation

The third dimension of *ecology of the self* is vocation, which connotes “a sense of life’s *purpose* and existential orientation and *destiny*. It is about investing one’s life, energies, time, and human potentiality in creative, life-giving, and community-building ways.”<sup>1087</sup> Vocation is “not a goal to be achieved,” because if vocation is assumed to be a goal then the self will arrive at a status quo and there will be no creativity left for the next step because the self assumes that he or she is now fully perfect.<sup>1088</sup> Instead, vocation is an existential life orientation. Basically, vocation is embedded in and occurs through the ongoing life journey as the way of the holistic self. Vocation becomes the radiance of energy throughout a life journey. Schipani stresses that “human vocation is not simply identified with one’s job, occupation, career, or profession even though those activities may be included.”<sup>1089</sup> This affirms that *vocation is not what I do, but rather who I am* in life’s journey.

Palmer says that vocation is one’s own “authentic selfhood.”<sup>1090</sup> Fundamentally, vocation not only refers to doing or action, but also points to who I am *within* the doing or

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1087. Schipani, “Heart of the Matter,” 160. Emphasis added.

1088. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 16.

1089. Schipani, “Purpose of Ministry,” 19.

1090. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 16.

action. In other words, the self is fully aware of his or her vocation. The word “vocation” is rooted in the Latin *vocare* (to call) which has a deep meaning as

a calling that I hear. Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my own identity, not the standards by which I *must* live—but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life.<sup>1091</sup>

Vocation is not a voice from *out there*, but rather how the self listens to the voice *in here*, with his or her whole being. Vocation emphasizes doing and requires totality, just as Lonergan states that religious conversion as a conversion of love in action requires “all one’s heart, and all one’s soul and one’s mind and all one’s strength.”<sup>1092</sup> Thus, vocation points to a holistic subjective presence. Vocation and the self are not two separate things. This makes vocation, like religious conversion, a “total and permanent self-surrender” in which self-transcendence occurs.<sup>1093</sup> The vocations of both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are personal vocations which show who they are. They, then, transcend beyond their personal boundaries in order to love others.

Vocation is also the way of obedience through listening and responding in daily life.

Steindl-Rast says,

The concept of obedience is far more comprehensive than a narrow notion of obedience as doing-what-you-are-told-to-do. Obedience in the full sense is the process of attuning the heart to the simple call contained in the complexity of a given situation ... I must become ob-audiens—thoroughly listening, obedient. I must give my ear, give myself.<sup>1094</sup>

Obedience becomes an essential aspect of listening and responding because vocation is not always totally clear in the beginning. Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, as

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1091. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, 4-5.

1092. Lonergan, *Method*, 242.

1093. Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

1094. Steindl-Rast, *Listening Heart*, 10.

mystics, show their obedience in listening to and discerning the voice through a total attentiveness, which is “*myself as listening*.”<sup>1095</sup> Mother Teresa visited the slums weekly while she was a Loreto sister; Ki Ageng Suryomentaram ran away from Kraton Yogyakarta to live as an ordinary person in Cilacap. These were their ways of *myself as listening*. Through listening to their own selves, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram reached their true selves, respectively. Vocation requires the self to listen and be attentive in the environment of life. As mystics, they have a “*personally passionate presence* [which is] characterized by intense devotion and loyalty.”<sup>1096</sup> No vocation comes from a vacuum, but rather *ecology of the self* helps one to be rooted and grounded in the environment of life, or in a “cosmic context and purpose,” as Lonergan highlighted.<sup>1097</sup> Moreover, growing in vocation in communal life creates “the way of *prophetic spirituality* ... [for] the possibility of the transformation and liberation of culture.”<sup>1098</sup> Prophetic spirituality refers to a *life-giving love* or responsibility to communal life, as shown by both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Vocation leads the good to become concrete through *orthopraxis*, or right action, in which the self achieves authenticity in self-transcendence.

Finally, *ecology of the self*, as the holistic system of the interconnected dimensions of vision, virtue, and vocation, is parallel to Lonergan’s intellectual, moral, and religious conversions, which occur within “a single consciousness, to conceive their relations in terms of sublation.”<sup>1099</sup> Both *ecology of the self* and conversion emphasize the wholeness and

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1095. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 63.

1096. William McNamara, *Mystical Passion: Spirituality for a Bored Society* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 19.

1097. Lonergan, *Method*, 242.

1098. Schipani, “Purpose of Ministry,” 21. Emphasis added.

1099. Lonergan, “Theology in Its New Context,” 19.

embodiment of the self as a subjective presence through knowing, being, and loving. Self-transcendence requires the self to be a unified whole, and not split into one aspect emphasized over another. If the medieval era over-emphasized the soul, then the intellectual movements of Enlightenment shifted into overemphasis of cognition, while the modern era recognizes the self as a whole being, with both the soul and cognition being of equal importance. *Ecology of the self* is in line with Lonergan's notion of subject, which "integrates the body and mind in authentic subjectivity and reads subjectivity in terms of a holistic, embodied experience."<sup>1100</sup> This is different from the idea of subjectivity in *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am), in which René Descartes "distinguishes the mind from the body, [and] he privileges the mind over the body."<sup>1101</sup> Thus, the work of the interconnected dimensions, or sublation, leads to the true self as the comprehensive basis of personal and communal self-transcendence.

Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram demonstrate self-transcendence as the mystical way through *ecology of the self*. Mysticism is not a withdrawal from the world and asocial lifestyles, but rather actively approaching the reality of life. Self-transcendence as a mystical way is not based on superstition, but rather relies on the self as the core of the human being. This mystical way requires of the mystic an authenticity of the self, through the process of knowing, being, and doing as personal formation and social transformation.

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1100. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 29.

1101. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 28.

## Human Authenticity: Being in Love with God in the Mystical Ways of

Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram

Lonergan states that for the fulfilment of authenticity a human being must achieve self-transcendence, in which the independent subject finds what is truly good as the objective value through conscious intentionality. Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence is unique, as Braman summarizes:

*Self-transcendence* is achieved in intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Thus, the authentic person struggles with ongoing exigencies of conversion, which are expressed by the transcendental imperatives: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible. *Without* intellectual conversion the person will consistently mistake the world of sense for the world mediated by meaning; *without* moral conversion, what is truly worthwhile and good will be understood in terms of values as ego-regarding, and *without* religious conversion one is "radically desolate: in a world without hope and without God."<sup>1102</sup>

For Lonergan, self-transcendence is not a concept as a result of thinking, or doing, but a knowing in which the self becomes a knower in and through his or her acts of knowing. The self as a knower will actualize his or her capacity holistically into *being in love with God*. *Being in love with God* as the ultimate fulfilment of human capacity for self-transcendence has three dimensions in oneness and wholeness of the self. The three dimensions are: the self, other selves, and God.

The first dimension of *being in love with God* is the self. Becoming a knower is the basis for self-transcendence because when the self becomes a knower, it leads to finding his or her true self. Foremost for self-transcendence is not *what* the self does, but *who* the self is. Understanding of the self as being a *self* is the fundamental basis for self-transcendence. Self-transcendence attempts to understand the self through conscious intentionality within the

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1102. Braman, *Meaning*, 69. Emphasis added.

ongoing process of the self in his or her life's journey through conversion. In short, there is no self-transcendence without conversion, or there is no existence of the self as subjective presence without consciousness. For Lonergan, consciousness is not perception, rather, consciousness is the subjective presence of the self in which the self is immersed in empirical experience. As I described above, conversion shapes the knowing, being, and doing of the self due to *ecology of the self*: vision, virtue, and vocation. *Ecology of the self* points to the holistic subjective presence in the reality of life, without setting up a dichotomy between sacred and profane, such as between soul and body, respectively. In *being in love with God*, the self who has the divine aspect is also the valued human aspect. Self authenticity refers to a "mature humanity" through a comprehensive conversion, which leads to the incarnate subject.<sup>1103</sup> The self, as the *incarnate subject*, takes the path of knowing and loving in dealing with himself or herself and other selves.

The second dimension of *being in love with God* has to do with other selves. Self-transcendence is being in relation or in response to other selves with(in) love. Love takes an essential role for self-transcendence because, for Lonergan, to love someone is "my transcending myself."<sup>1104</sup> In other words, human authenticity is about love as a longing for union with others "without qualification or conditions or reservations or limits."<sup>1105</sup> Self-transcendence is due to establishing communal life. Lonergan is in line with Paul Tillich on the correlation between love and union in human life. "Life," as Tillich says,

is being in actuality and love is the moving power of life ... Love is the drive towards the unity of the separated ... Love manifests its greatest power there where it overcomes the greatest separation. And the greatest separation is the separation of self from self ... [The power of love] is the fulfilment and triumph of love that it is able to reunite the most radically separated beings,

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1103. McCarthy, *Authenticity*, 222.

1104. Lonergan, *Method*, 109.

1105. Lonergan, *Method*, 109.



namely individual persons ... Love, like all emotions, is an expression of the total participation of the being which is in an emotional state.<sup>1106</sup>

Love, like a driving machine, becomes the moving power of life to build and to restore human relationships. Love becomes the energy or capacity of life “when one falls in love.”<sup>1107</sup> *Being in love with God* is not only *making room* for God, but also *making space* for others. Braman highlights Lonergan’s thought:

Falling in love with God is the fulfilment of what it means to be an authentic human being, and this fulfilment overflows into love of one’s neighbor as oneself ... *being in love with God* is a collaboration and cooperation with God and others to sustain and realize the order of the universe.<sup>1108</sup>

Because of the challenge of separating the self from the self in life, being in love builds a new relationship with others, subject to subject or intersubjectivity, in which the self sees himself or herself in others as human beings. Intersubjectivity is the path of nurturing the universe passionately as the home for all. Because to be in love without qualification toward others, even others categorized as enemies, the essence of love is not separateness but union. The energy of love is for life rather than for death.

The third dimension of *being in love with God* is God. For Lonergan, self-transcendence does not just have a human aspect, but also a divine aspect. God is “the first agent of every event and emergence and development,”<sup>1109</sup> and “the supreme value.”<sup>1110</sup> These affirm that God is not *out there*, but exists and is involved in the dynamic of the universe. Lonergan often cited “God’s love being poured out in our hearts” (Romans 5:5) as

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1106. Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice* (New York: A Galaxy Book, 1960), 25-6.

1107. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

1108. Braman, *Meaning*, 69. Emphasis added. See Lonergan, *Insight*, 721.

1109. Lonergan, *Insight*, 709.

1110. Lonergan, *Method*, 39.

an affirmation that human beings are in partnership with God. There is a “co-presence” through knowing and loving.<sup>1111</sup> In other words, by *being in love with God*, the self becomes knower and lover at the same time.

“God is love” (1 John 4:16) is a basic understanding of who God is in self-transcendence, as Lonergan states that “without the eyes of love, the world is too evil for God to be good, for a good God to exist.”<sup>1112</sup> In the reality of life, there is a paradox between belief in God and life in love due to the understanding some groups have of God, such as killing someone in the name of God, yet with the purpose to love God. Lonergan firmly states that “God is not an object” which people can objectify for their own agenda. There is no reason for a person to hate others as the path of knowing and loving God (1 John 4:20-21).<sup>1113</sup> In other words, God should be understood beyond religions, beyond theologies, and beyond doctrines.

As a philosopher-theologian, Lonergan constructs the notion of *being in love with God* by relying on Christianity, but Lonergan does not limit God to his own understanding. Of course, each religion has its own doctrine of God, but all religions should understand God as the “transcendent mystery” in life experience.<sup>1114</sup> Lonergan warns that doctrines can “strengthen or burden the individual’s allegiance. [Doctrines] can unite or disrupt. [Doctrines] can confer authority and power. [Doctrines] can be associated with what is congenial or what is alien to a given polity or culture.”<sup>1115</sup> In a pluralistic society, the differentiation of doctrines on God is a sensitive and a dangerous issue that can impact social

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1111. McGinn, “Mystical Consciousness,” 51.

1112. Lonergan, *Method*, 117.

1113. Lonergan, *Method*, 342.

1114. Lonergan, *Method*, 342.

1115. Lonergan, *Method*, 319.

life. God cannot be limited by doctrines; there is another dimension of God as transcendent mystery. Self-transcendence requires openness to discover the intersection of religious traditions or wisdom of others. *Being in love with God* points to God's presence in the reality of life in the world. This is another basis for self-authenticity, where one should not be seeking a God who dwells out of the world but a God who dwells in this world, here and now.

Finally, *being in love with God* points to "mystical consciousness [as] the prolongation of ordinary consciousness."<sup>1116</sup> *Being in love with God* requires the interweaving of the self, other selves, and God. In light of mysticism, *being in love with God* teaches that "both knowing and loving are integral to the encounter with God."<sup>1117</sup> It happens through transcending the self in the world. *Being in love with God* does not have a doctrinal basis; rather, the self is the basis and is available to all human beings. *Being in love with God*, as the fulfilment of human authenticity, is *the fifth level* of conscious intentionality, which comes after the four levels of conscious intentionality: experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. The fulfilment of human authenticity is rooted in life experience, because life in the world is precious. Thus, self-transcendence is a mystical consciousness through ordinary life. This creates self-transcendence as contextual and concrete, such as in the loving action of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram.

***Mother Teresa: Wholehearted Free Service to the Poorest of the Poor***

In light of *being in love with God*, the capacity for ultimate fulfilment of self-transcendence for Mother Teresa was as *wholehearted free service for the poorest of the*

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<sup>1116</sup>. Roy, *Mystical Consciousness*, 124.

<sup>1117</sup>. McGinn, "Mystical Consciousness," 51.

*poor*. The fulfilment itself occurred during the life of Mother Teresa, and continues through the Missionaries of Charity. This became their fourth vow. This fourth vow affirms *who* they are as the Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity; as Mother Teresa said, “Our calling is to be busy, *only* with the poor.”<sup>1118</sup> This calling becomes more specific because for Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity, they care for not just the poor in general, but the poorest of the poor (or the poor who are very poor or the neediest poor). The poorest of the poor inspired Mother Teresa not only to serve them, but also to identify with them by living in radical poverty: having only three saris, a simple handbag, and a pair of sandals. This is the mystical way of Mother Teresa, showing the *face of poorness* not through the world of immediacy, but through the world mediated by meaning through the precepts of intentional consciousness: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. By living with the poor, the Missionaries of Charity offer a new objectivity beyond the ocular data. Mother Teresa said that there is strength, value, and love of the poor through compassion. Moreover, in light of mysticism, seeing the poorest of the poor was for Mother Teresa seeing Jesus Christ, who identifies with the hungry, the thirsty, and the needy. These establish the authentic subjectivity of Mother Teresa and the Sisters of the Missionaries of Charity through love for others and God.

The tremendous poverty in Calcutta, called “the dark [hole] of the poor,” constructs a contextual way of love for others as self-transcendence. Mother Teresa moves beyond herself *to touch* the Dalit, or the untouchable caste. For Mother Teresa, love is the greatest power to unify the poorest of the poor. They are separated by gender, social status, economic status, even by religious doctrine, but they are unified by their humanity because of the power of love. In their radical way of being poor, Mother Teresa, the Sisters, and the poorest of the

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1118. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 249. Emphasis added.

poor have the same value of humanity without attributes. For Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity, practicing radical poverty is *love*. Mother Teresa affirmed this; “Our people are poor by force, but our poverty is of our own choice. We want to be poor like Christ who, being rich, chose to be born and live and work among the poor.”<sup>1119</sup> What is left are personal relationships within friendship and gratitude in “cheerfulness” as one virtue of the Missionaries of Charity.<sup>1120</sup> This acknowledges the fulfilment of self-transcendence by having a “deep-set joy,” as Lonergan stated.<sup>1121</sup> Mother Teresa not only contemplated *kenosis*, but also concretely practiced *kenosis*. As Mother Teresa stated, “*We are contemplatives in action.*”<sup>1122</sup> This is in line with Lonergan, that which is good must be concrete.

The center of *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* is not only social work; rather, it is also work of Jesus Christ, as Mother Teresa states: “We are to be God’s associates, doing his work, working with him, for him.”<sup>1123</sup> God dwells in Mother Teresa and the Sisters’ love, strength, joy, and compassion through their service. Once, Mother Teresa affirmed: “Without faith no love; without love no service of the poor, the abandoned, the sick, the cripple, the dying. You can do our work two years without religious motivation, but not a whole lifetime. If you do not believe it, try to do it.”<sup>1124</sup> Her statements demonstrate that Mother Teresa took into account the religious aspect of her self-transcendence. As Catholic nuns, Mother Teresa and the Sisters are rooted in the Catholic tradition without being trapped

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1119. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 95.

1120. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 97.

1121. Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

1122. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 254. Emphasis added.

1123. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 161.

1124. Joly, *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*, 161.

in a doctrinal formulation. “I thirst” as the core of Mother Teresa’s spirituality expresses her self-transcendence as a way to see God in the poorest of the poor and to love wholeheartedly. There is no dichotomy between the way to love God and to love others. Being rooted in a faith tradition nurtures the fruitfulness of humanity. Moreover, *wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor* becomes a mystical consciousness as a prolongation of ordinary consciousness in daily life.

***Ki Ageng Suryomentaram: Manungsa Tanpa Ciri: Semat, Drajat, lan Kramat (Pure Being: Without Wealth, Public Recognition, and Power)***

Like Mother Teresa, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram described human authenticity with the phrase *manungsa tanpa ciri* (pure being), which means one’s life without *semat, drajat, lan kramat* (wealth, public recognition, and power). *Manungsa tanpa ciri* as the fulfilment of self-transcendence is a paradox given his noble birth as a prince of Kraton Yogyakarta; however, for Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, his noble birth was not his true self. In the midst of commonality, people seek affirmation through social status, but Ki Ageng Suryomentaram renounced his princely title. His paradoxical experience and reflection on the self led him to find *Kawruh Jiwa* (self-knowledge) as a mystical way in ordinary life based on *raos* (intuitive inner feeling). In the Javanese philosophy of life, *raos* is the core of the self in relation to others, the cosmos, and God by being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable and being responsible for living in harmony. *Raos* is the basic nature of human beings. In other words, *manungsa tanpa ciri* as the fulfilment of self-transcendence is the fruit of *raos* and available to everyone. The fulfilment of the self-transcendence of *manungsa tanpa ciri* requires *olah raos* (training of the *raos*). *Olah raos* points to self-mastery and sensitivity as a lifelong journey.

*Manungsa tanpa ciri* points to a mystical way of emptiness or nothingness as the way to reach others. In the midst of feudalism, which tends to measure others by status, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram transcended his status due to *raos sami* (*raos* of others). By acknowledging *raos sami*, the self discerns his or her *kramadangsa*, which drives his or her own satisfaction without considering others; then, the self makes a decision to choose *manungsa tanpa ciri*, which leads to altruism. *Manungsa tanpa ciri*, which is due to altruism, is a lifelong process because the self is always tempted by *kramadangsa*, which is due to egoism. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram is in line with Lonergan who said, “Egoists do not turn into altruists overnight.”<sup>1125</sup> There is a process of true selves in the societal context. For Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, the fulfilment of self-transcendence through *manungsa tanpa ciri* is not only due to personal freedom as the self, but also leads to tranquility in communal life where humanity is appreciated. This acknowledges that *raos* has the power of social transformation because “*raos sami murugaken tentrem, lajeng manahipun sugih sesarengan lan guyub*” (*raos sami* leads to tranquility, which achieves richness and harmonious unity).<sup>1126</sup> This social transformation leads to the new era of *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living). In the midst of the power and authority of feudalism and colonialism, *Windu Kencana*, as a new hope for social life, sees that “the idea of ‘mysticism’ is a social construction,” as Grace Jantzen states.<sup>1127</sup> The fundamental basis of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram’s longing for harmonious living is “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I did not see a human being). This is a longing to build relationship based on humanity rather than attributes, such as wealth,

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1125. Lonergan, *Method*, 53.

1126. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, *Kawruh Jiwa* Jilid 1, 49.

1127. Grace M. Jantzen, *Power, Gender, and Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 12.

public recognition, and power. This concedes that self-transcendence for communal building must begin with a personal conscious intentionality in the reality of life.

*Manungsa tanpa ciri*, as the fruit of *olah raos*, is not only concerned with the self and other selves, but also with God. In *olah raos* (training of the *raos*), there is an intersection between the self and God, who dwells in *raos* and illuminates the self. God already exists in the human heart. Lonergan insists on a religious aspect as *being in love with God*, as does Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in *manungsa tanpa ciri*, which inherently has divine aspect. In light of the Javanese experience of mystical union *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* (unity of the human being and God), *raos* becomes *guru sejati* (genuine guru) which leads humans on a lifelong journey.<sup>1128</sup> In other words, *manunggaling kawula-Gusti* is not about the unity between God and human beings in the afterlife, but also in the life experience of the here and now, *in the world*. What is needed is human consciousness and sensitivity. Moreover, because God dwells in *raos*, this means God dwells in all human beings beyond borders, including religion. Thus, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram has an inclusive understanding of God, in which no single religion or indigenous belief can claim to be the truest one. The existence of God, or *Gusti*, is found to be much bigger through life experience rather than any doctrinal explanation. Finally, *manungsa tanpa ciri* becomes a mystical consciousness as a prolongation of ordinary consciousness in daily life.

Having set the stage, there is an intersection between Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, who are rooted in different religious, cultural, and social contexts, in Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence as the fulfilment of human authenticity. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram transcend in the dimensions of the self, other selves, and God based on what is truly good, truly valuable, and truly worthwhile as an objective

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1128. Endraswara, *Agama Jawa*, 297.



value *in* and *for* life, here and now. In light of Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram begin with their empirical experiences, not a conceptual theory, and then develop within the transcendental precepts: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible. This inspires a new approach for a world of pluralism.

In light of self-transcendence as mystical consciousness, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram demonstrate a dialectical process of mystical contemplation and transformative service. This dialectical process highlights, as Jürgen Moltmann says, how “[t]here is no mysticism of the soul without the mysticism of sociality.”<sup>1129</sup> Personal mysticism intertwines with communal mysticism. In other words, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram reveal that mysticism is not world-denying or withdrawal from the world, but is deeply and holistically engaged in the reality of life. As Willigis Jäger states: “Authentic mysticism leads us back into the world.”<sup>1130</sup> Mysticism is embodied in self-transcendence as a mystical way of life, in which there is no dualism of sacred and profane in humanity. It is no longer possible to see the self in the dichotomous existence of soul and body; rather, the self is the body, mind, and spirit taken as a whole. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram show that a mystical life is about the integration of life, wholeness, and compassion. Self-transcendence as mystical consciousness is the prolongation of ordinary consciousness in daily life by attending to and verifying the four levels of conscious intentionality: experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding within empirical, intellectual, rational, and responsible consciousness, respectively.<sup>1131</sup>

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1129. Moltmann, *Spirit of Life*, 94. Emphasis added.

1130. Jäger, *Search for the Meaning of Life*, 22.

1131. Price, “Lonergan and the Foundation,” 180.

Lonergan's four levels of conscious intentionality describe how self-transcendence as mystical consciousness can be approached rationally. In the previous chapters, I discussed how Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence applied to the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. This is contrary to the thesis of Afthonul Afif, who claims that mysticism is irrational. In his book *Ilmu Bahagia: Menurut Ki Ageng Suryomentaram*, Afif explains that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram's notion of *Kawruh Jiwa* is logical, systematic, and has a well-defined method. Functionally, *Kawruh Jiwa* is a tool for analysis and problem solving in daily life. *Kawruh Jiwa* should not be categorized as *klenik* (a black magical rite), or *Kejawen* (Javanese mysticism) because they relate to the irrational. Instead, *Kawruh Jiwa* should be categorized as a science, such as philosophy and psychology.<sup>1132</sup>

I disagree with Afif's argument on four points. First, on one hand, I agree that *Kawruh Jiwa* is not *klenik*, given that Ki Ageng Suryomentaram strongly clarified that *Kawruh Jiwa* does not believe in superstition, as I described this in Chapter 5. On the other hand, I disagree with Afif when he says that *Kawruh Jiwa* has no correlation with Javanese mysticism. As I discussed, *raos* as the core of *Kawruh Jiwa* is a Javanese mystical worldview which is *cosmotheandric*—the correlation between anthropos, cosmos, and theos. Removing *Kawruh Jiwa* from Javanese mysticism is the same as removing *Kawruh Jiwa* from its homeland, which has a specific culture and philosophy of life. At this point, *Kawruh Jiwa* has lost its originality. Second, dichotomizing *Kawruh Jiwa* and mysticism as rational versus irrational is a misperception of mysticism. I demonstrated that, in light of Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence, *Kawruh Jiwa* is mysticism and rational through the transcendental

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1132. Afthonul Afif, *Ilmu Bahagia: Menurut Ki Ageng Suryomentaram* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Kepik, 2012), 4-6.

method. Richard King quotes Paul Tillich: “Mysticism is not irrational.”<sup>1133</sup> Third, mysticism has much to do with social construction for social justice, as argued in this dissertation when I employed the scholarly works of Grace M. Jantzen, Dorothee Soelle, Susan Rakoczy, and Curtiss Paul Deyoung. Contrary to Afif, who assumes that mysticism does not positively contribute to social life, Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram *transform* social life through their mystical ways. Fourth, in the academic world, especially that of theology and spirituality, there are a variety of studies on mysticism from different religious traditions, and magnificent resources on mysticism. Finally, self-transcendence as mystical consciousness can be a foundation of interspirituality for a pluralistic country such as Indonesia.

#### Self-Transcendence as the Foundation of Interspirituality and Its Contribution to Indonesia

##### ***Self-Transcendence as the Foundation of Interspirituality***

Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence and Teasdale’s notion of interspirituality share several insights: the self as a holistic and embodied being, emphasis on an empirical instead of conceptual basis, intentional consciousness, openness, community building, and the fulfilment of self authenticity. The discussion of the intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram concedes that self-transcendence is the foundation of interspirituality. The intersection occurred based on the diversity between Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram in gender, race, culture, nationality, religion and belief, tradition, and economic and societal contexts. Teasdale highlights, “Interspirituality recognizes that many paths lead to the summit, and each one of them is

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1133. Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and ‘The Mystic East’* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 25.

valid.”<sup>1134</sup> Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram came to the same concern for humanity through understanding, action, and love within the reality of life. Interspirituality acknowledges that as long as people accept their own humanity, they will accept diversity. Plurality is not an obstacle to creating peaceful living, as long as each individual has the desire for self-transcendence. In light of Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence, Saracino called this desire a “pluralist attitude.”<sup>1135</sup> The pluralist attitude refers the “openness to alterity” in which intersubjectivity is maintained.<sup>1136</sup> A pluralist attitude creates a person-to-person relationship which leads to a community, and leads to understanding and engagement with other cultures. According to Teasdale, interspirituality contains the prefix *inter-*, which points to “eagerness” and “openness” for communication and learning from others.<sup>1137</sup> This eagerness and openness is part of the character of self-transcendence: “awareness of desire (Eros) in the form of unfulfilment and incompleteness” in other words, unrestricted desire to know others and seek interconnectedness to build communal life.<sup>1138</sup> Self-transcendence is about the self *in* relationship with others and God *in* the world.

Self-transcendence as the foundation of interspirituality requires a quality of the self to avoid the *false self* and reach the *true self*. The quality of the self rests on “a letting go of the false self so that we *can* and *do* love.”<sup>1139</sup> Fundamentally, interspirituality is not interreligious dialogue as a common practice for tolerance, but rather the capacity of self-

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1134. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 28.

1135. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 61.

1136. Saracino, *On Being Human*, 145.

1137. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 27.

1138. Cornel W. du Toit, “Self-transcendence and Eros: The Human Condition between Desire and the Infinite,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 67 (2011): 11, accessed March 17, 2018, doi: 10.4102/hts.v67i3.944.

1139. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 242.

transcendence. *Genuine* tolerance is the result of only interspirituality.<sup>1140</sup> The focus of interspirituality is the person as subject, who has an intentional consciousness, as Teasdale states: “If we are truly *intermystics*, we are open to wisdom wherever we find it.”<sup>1141</sup> Thus, who is a mystic? “Everyone is a mystic.”<sup>1142</sup> A mystic is anyone transcending the self in ordinary life through intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, which compose the *ecology of the self*. In short, self-transcendence, as the foundation of interspirituality, is mystical consciousness. The foundation of interspirituality is not a religious tradition but rather self-transcendence, which is expressed as a mystical consciousness of the self as a subject who is grounded in his or her context, like Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Finally, self-transcendence as a totally present way of being creates a path of life integration. Interspirituality is not merely about religions or beliefs in dialogue, but goes beyond by interconnecting all of reality in order to create radical compassion and *Windu Kencana*, as Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram did, respectively; and to contribute a new hope of harmonious living in pluralistic countries, such as Indonesia.

### ***Interspirituality and Its Contribution to Indonesia***

In Chapter 1, I quoted a proverb: “*Mereka yang bukan saudaramu dalam iman adalah saudaramu dalam kemanusiaan*” (Those who are not your brothers and sisters in faith, are your brothers and sisters in humanity). This proverb reminds Indonesians that human beings may be divided based on their faith, but they are united in their existence as

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1140. I use the term “*genuine* tolerance” to imply a true, authentic, “*genuine*” tolerance and to distinguish said tolerance from surface level, or “*words only*” tolerance, such as the practice of interreligious dialogue.

1141. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 238.

1142. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 243.

humans. It also highlights the struggle of Indonesia as a pluralistic country in which, on one hand, diversity is a treasure, and, on the other hand, it is a latent problem in the conflict of *suku, agama, ras, dan antar golongan* (SARA), meaning “ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group.” Specifically, the increase of intolerance and violence has been triggered by the increase of *Wahhabism* and the *fatwa* of MUI against pluralism, liberalism, and secularism. *Wahhabism* and the *fatwa* are not about Islamic life or Islam as the single religious majority, but are reactions against Indonesia as a *peaceful home* for all, under the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity). Meanwhile, the four forms of interreligious dialogue currently in place are an inadequate approach. The proverb above calls Indonesians to return their unified existence. This is in line with Teasdale’s notion of interspirituality in which “all [beings], in all possible worlds, are our brothers and sisters, belonging to the large sacred community of the cosmos.”<sup>1143</sup> How, then, will interspirituality contribute to Indonesia?

*Interspirituality complements interreligious dialogue.* For decades, interreligious dialogue has been nurturing Indonesia as a pluralistic country with the latent problem of SARA as I described in Chapter 1. Moreover, in the last two decades, the influence of fundamentalist movements shows that the four forms of interreligious dialogue are inadequate. For Indonesia, there is a shift in emphasis needed, from *finding God beyond dogma* to *finding humanity beyond religion* through interspirituality. This shifting emphasis is a necessity in response to the increase in intolerance. The radical Islamic movement promotes and practices intolerance and violence toward people who are outside radical Islam. Interspirituality takes a step forward beyond religion by shifting emphasis from doctrine to the self as an existential being. The emphasis on the self points to the basic meaning of spirituality as the capacity for self-transcendence both personally and communally, in

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1143. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 240.

response to the reality of Indonesian life. Self-transcendence as the core of spirituality embraces humanity beyond human-constructed boundaries. In other words, self-transcendence is the ability to go beyond the divisions of ethnicity, religion, race, and intra-group (SARA). Interspirituality emphasizes an inclusive openness to others and proclaims “We are *anak bangsa* (children of the nation).” For Indonesians, the term *anak bangsa* refers to the personal and communal value of the self—the self who may belong to any of the more than 700 ethnic groups in Indonesia. “We are *anak bangsa*” is in line with the paradigm “we are consciousness,” which points to the intimate connection between the self and the entire cosmos.<sup>1144</sup> In short, religion should be part of *anak bangsa* and should not destroy Indonesians as a family and nation. Interreligious dialogue has been developing in Indonesia since 1969, but its progress has been inadequate in relation to the increase of *Wahhabism* across the archipelago, and the *Wahhabis* being closed-off to other religions as well as the cultural heritage of Indonesia. Interspirituality promotes an approach beyond the religions of *anak bangsa* and points to individuals through the self-transcendence of each *anak bangsa*. Interspirituality’s relevance has grown with the increase of the fundamentalist movement, as fundamentalism believes in the literal inerrancy of scripture and focuses on heavenly futures rather than earthly realizations of peaceful living. Interspirituality offers an alternative approach to fundamentalism, and a way to find balance in life, as interspirituality insists that *being spiritual is to be human holistically* through self-transcendence.

*Interspirituality promotes reconciliation for spirituality of harmony.* Interspirituality has a different focus from interreligious dialogue. Interspirituality is not interested in sharing knowledge about God, but rather in sharing experiences of God through self-

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1144. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 65.

transcendence.<sup>1145</sup> Interspirituality is about intentional consciousness through a contemplative approach, expressed with mutual trust. Teasdale states that interspirituality “must see traditions *in relationship to each other*, and provide options. The truth itself is big enough to include our diversity of views. They are all based on authentic inner experience, and so are all valid.”<sup>1146</sup> In light of post-colonialism, interspirituality highlights that each religious tradition is a treasure. This is a recalling of living harmoniously in diversity. Interspirituality offers a *reconciliation* among the six official religions, and between the six official religions and indigenous beliefs. In the past, there were attitudes of triumphalism and colonialism which came along with colonial religions, such as when Islam and Christianity came to Indonesia for example, the stigma of Christianity as the religion of Dutch colonialism, or Islam’s colonial and post-colonial conflicts with *abangan*, Javanese people who are officially Muslim but practice indigenous beliefs, and *kebatinan*, a Javanese mysticism. These examples continue to the present day. At present, religious identity, including indigenous beliefs, expresses an individual’s identity in which he or she belongs to a religious group, personally and communally. However, a religious identity also confirms that an individual is different from others due to his or her religious identity. There is a nuance of building a “wall through religious identity.” In other words, the institution and the doctrine of religions tends to divide human beings. In comparison, spirituality invites human beings to be united in plurality. Religion involves specific people who belong to specific religious groups, while spirituality involves everyone. The *reconciliation* achieved through interspirituality raises a question:

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1145. A person may learn about God through his or her religious doctrine, but not every person will be able to experience God or the presence of God in his or her life within the constraints of doctrine or religious practice. Because interspirituality goes beyond the limitations of the doctrine, practice, and institution of religion, interspirituality offers more ways for people to experience God within their own lives.

1146. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 12. Emphasis added.



“What do you *bring from* your religion or belief and what do you *share* with us?” In particular, interspirituality promotes *reconciliation*. In light of *harmony* as an “Asian spirituality,” interspirituality has returned to the nature of Indonesia.<sup>1147</sup>

*Interspirituality pulls heaven down to the earth.* The November 7, 2017, ruling of the Supreme Court of Indonesia placed indigenous beliefs on an equal footing with the country’s six official religions, and granted legality to indigenous practices. The equal status did not cause the indigenous beliefs to become religions, but it did categorize them as one group, called *Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the Almighty One). Interspirituality contributes an intersectional theological emphasis to the six official religions and indigenous beliefs. The theological intersection “pulls heaven down to the earth.” As I described in Chapter 2, Teasdale viewed interspirituality as related to *panentheism*, which emphasizes the omnipresence of God without the dualistic understanding of God as *here* or *there*, limited by place, time, or event. *Panentheism* upholds interspirituality, as both promote interconnectedness of the entire cosmos, which is plural. To clarify my phrase “pulls heaven down to the earth,” I refer to the reflection of an Australian theologian, David Tacey, who states, “Religion had taught me to find God in heaven, Aboriginality had shown me to find the sacred on earth.”<sup>1148</sup> Interspirituality constructs the wholeness of heaven and earth, the unity of sacred and profane, and the final integration of life. Interspirituality invites people to experience ordinary consciousness as mystical consciousness. The revelation of God comes not only through scripture, but also through daily life.

*Interspirituality fosters a theological study of mysticism, based on self-transcendence as a mystical consciousness for humanity.* In Indonesia, non-Catholic seminaries, schools,

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1147. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously*, 123.

1148. David Tacey, *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality* (Hove, East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge, 2004), 6.

and faculty departments of theology do not have courses of study on mysticism and only rarely offer courses on spirituality. Unfortunately, many Indonesians, regardless of religion and including many scholars, are prejudiced against mysticism as it is taken for granted that mysticism is irrational, magical, religiously misguided, etc. Margaret Smith states that mysticism is “the most vital element in all true religions, rising up in revolt against cold formality and religious torpor.”<sup>1149</sup> Mysticism is not in contradiction with religion but rather is an essential part of it. Religion is derived from mysticism. Soelle adds, “*Without mysticism*, the image of the human being deteriorates into that of a consuming and a producing machine that neither needs nor is capable of God.”<sup>1150</sup> Both Smith and Soelle highlight that mysticism is a beneficial aspect for religion and humanity. The mystical intersection between religion and humanity occurs through the self *as* a mystic. As Teasdale highlights, “*Only the mystic* can be truly Interspiritual, since in the end it is a matter of spiritual practice. Depth seeks depth.”<sup>1151</sup> In other words, interspirituality is dependent on the mystical life of the self. Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram were rooted in two different religious, belief traditions and cultures; they developed love for the self, for others, and for God; and their mystical lives were fruitful for humanity. Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence as a mystical consciousness is available to *everyone* who is concerned with “wholeness, integration of life, and fruitfulness of love and compassion for others,” as both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram were.<sup>1152</sup> Self-transcendence as mystical consciousness is based on human beings instead of doctrine, which is the reason mystical consciousness is

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1149. Margaret Smith, “The Nature and Meaning of Mysticism,” in *Understanding Mysticism*, ed. Richard Woods (New York: Image Books, 1980), 20.

1150. Soelle, *Silent Cry*, 44. Emphasis added.

1151. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 232. Emphasis added.

1152. Susan Rakoczy, *Great Mystics & Social Justice: Walking on the Two Feet of Love* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 15.

available for everyone. Panikkar highlights, “The mystic will accept the given doctrines, but his [/her] faith will not entirely depend upon them. The faith of the mystic goes deeper than demands of belief-system.”<sup>1153</sup> The intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram becomes a model of interspirituality that can be an inspiration for societal and academic contexts in Indonesia. In the societal context, interspirituality promotes reconciliation and constructs harmonious life at the grass roots level. In the academic context, the Center for Religious Studies (PSAA, Pusat Studi Agama-Agama) at the Department of Theology at Duta Wacana Christian University (DWCU) in Yogyakarta has spent decades developing interreligious dialogue through the several programs I described in Chapter 1. In the future, the Center for Spiritual Formation (PPS, Pusat Pengembangan Spiritualitas), also part of the Department of Theology at DWCU, will initiate the development of interspirituality through programs such as seminars, discussions, research, etc. More specifically, the Center for Spiritual Formation will be a pioneer of interspirituality among Christians, Sufi groups, and indigenous belief groups, promoting their *Interspiritual Voice* in response to the increase of intolerance in Indonesia. This will be a valuable contribution for nurturing Indonesia as *a peaceful home for all*.

These contributions of interspirituality will assist the religious life of Indonesians as they move deeper into a spirituality in which divinity and humanity are interconnected within self-transcendence. In response to the increase of fundamentalism and radicalism in Indonesia, interspirituality proposes a soft, humble, and peaceful way of being, in which people will find God beyond religion.

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1153. Panikkar, *Invisible Harmony: Essays on Contemplation and Responsibility*, ed. Harry James Cargas (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 6.

## Conclusion

In light of interspirituality, mysticism is a way of life expressed throughout the process of self-transcendence. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram become models of true mystics who want “nothing else but to love life.”<sup>1154</sup> They are not *esoteric mystics*<sup>1155</sup> who possess secret “knowledge” that is only for certain people, but rather *mediocre mystics*,<sup>1156</sup> people who are *on the road* of ordinary life. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram lived in the midst of society alongside other people, and their ordinary lives became the foundation for their mystical ways. For a *mediocre mystic*, mystical life is not a peak stage that must be reached, but rather a lifelong process of daily life. Referring to Underhill’s examination of mysticism, the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram demonstrate “True mysticism is active and practical, not passive and theoretical. It is an organic life-process, [something] which the whole self does,” as shown in the *ecology of the self*.<sup>1157</sup> The interconnectedness of vision, virtue, and vocation leads Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram to self-transcendence, in which their contemplative and active dimensions are intertwined in their life paths. The intertwining of contemplation and action fosters a capacity for self-transcendence in which the self is the

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1154. Soelle, *Silent Cry*, 282.

1155. Nevill Drury, *Dictionary of Mysticism and the Occult* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 80. Drury explains that esoteric mysticism refers to a secret teaching which is mysterious, occult, hidden, and only for initiates of the group.

1156. Stella, *Finding God Beyond Religion*, 52. Stella explains that the term “mediocre” comes from the Latin *mediocris*, within literally means “halfway up a mountain.” Mediocre mysticism is not about dwelling on the top of the mountain or having a peak experience, but about an ongoing life journey.

1157. Underhill, *Mysticism*, 81.

unity and wholeness of spiritual and material dimensions, as Lonergan defines the subject as the embodiment of intellectual, moral and religious life.

The mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are rooted in two different contexts, but they intersect within the process of self-transcendence as they share a mystical consciousness which is concerned with loving humanity. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram prove their human authenticity through radical love: *wholehearted free service for the poorest of the poor* and *manungsa tanpa ciri: semat, drajat, lan kramat* (*pure being: without wealth, public recognition, and power*), respectively. Self-transcendence is a mystical consciousness through ordinary life, which affirms that “human love as well as divine” exist simultaneously in the authentic self.<sup>1158</sup> The intersection of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram becomes a model of interspirituality for Indonesia as a pluralistic country. *Anak bangsa* requires the individual to become a subject by being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible in relation to the world, and thereby attain self-transcendence. Lonergan’s notion of self-transcendence is *a universal mystical way* that “enshrines the basic, dynamic thrust of the human person and is applicable to all men and women everywhere and at all times. If one accepts this and its application to mysticism, it follows that all human beings are called to mysticism.”<sup>1159</sup> Thus, to be interspiritual is to be a mystic, and to be interspiritual is not simply to be universalist, but rather to allow unity in diversity (*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) of existence.

“Interspirituality is based on the existential, innate interdependence of all beings, the essential interconnectedness of all reality. As do all sentient beings, the religions have a profound inner connection with one another and, ultimately, depend on one another for survival.”<sup>1160</sup>

- Wayne Teasdale

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1158. Dunne, “Being in Love,” 167.

1159. Johnston, *Mystical Theology*, 189.

1160. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 173.

## CONCLUSION

“If we dare to enter the *mystical ground of our being*, we might find a source from which peace and compassion arise. This is the hope of the mystical traditions: to withdraw from the social violence of claim and counter-claim to access the life-giving currents that flow beneath a divided world, offering it an opportunity for healing and renewal.”<sup>1161</sup>

- David Tacey

Living harmoniously in a pluralistic country such as Indonesia is a challenge, because harmonious living relates to the sustainability of life. Religion, as the most sensitive aspect of the latent conflict in Indonesia, deteriorates the value of humanity itself. This is because religious fundamentalism is more concerned with the value of religious normativity than the value of humanity. For nearly half a century, Indonesians have been developing the four forms of interreligious dialogue, but in the last two decades the influence of radical Islamic movement has increased massively across the archipelago, destabilizing efforts toward interreligious dialogue. The movement emphasizes a supremacy of doctrinal basis and wields the power of the majority religious group over minority groups. As a result, the tolerance of intolerance has become common in society. Intolerance is expressed not only toward people living in neighborhoods, but also toward the deceased, due to their different religions or beliefs. For example, in October 2017, a deceased person was not allowed to be buried in a public cemetery in the village of Brebes, Central Java, because the deceased was a follower of *Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa* or indigenous beliefs.<sup>1162</sup> The most recent case of intolerance occurred on December 17, 2018 in Yogyakarta: the villagers of Purbayan cut off the top of a cross intended for a grave in a public cemetery before the burial service of

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1161. Tacey, *Spirituality Revolution*, 5. Emphasis added.

1162. Oda, “Jadi Penganut Aliran Kepercayaan, Jenazah Ditolak Warga Untuk Dimakamkan Di Pemakaman Umum,” *TribunJogja.com*, October 7, 2017, <http://jogja.tribunnews.com/2017/10/07/jadi-penganut-aliran-kepercayaan-jenazah-ditolak-warga-untuk-dimakamkan-di-pemakaman-umum>.

a deceased Catholic.<sup>1163</sup> This adds to the paradox of Yogyakarta, which has the motto “City of Tolerance,” but whose society in real life practices intolerance. These cases of intolerance demonstrate that tolerance is only on the surface and at formal levels of the relationship between majority and minority, rather than on the level of human beings. Moreover, the increase of intolerance in Indonesia is evidence of the inability of religion to nurture peaceful living.

Since starting to write this dissertation in April 2018, I explored various cases of intolerance in Indonesia, shown in Chapter 1. During this process, several acts of intolerance have occurred, dealing with religion, indigenous beliefs, and the cultural heritage of Indonesia. Now, in December 2018, finding myself at the end of this dissertation, another case of intolerance occurred as I mentioned above. This case discloses how religious fundamentalism has been growing at the grass roots of societal life. This fundamentalism excludes religion from the socio-cultural context. Indonesians need to have both a broader spectrum of life as *anak bangsa* (children of the nation) and a deep religious life that goes beyond symbols, practices, institutions, and majority and minority status. Indonesians have to move from elevating religion to digging deeper into spirituality, from an emphasis on doctrine to an emphasis on lived experience, and from dichotomy of the self to a holistic self. Spirituality is about the integration of life, rooted in the contexts of the personal, the

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1163. Safiul Hadi and Amirullah, “Kevikepan Yogya: Ada Dua Peristiwa sebelum Pemotongan Nisan Salib,” *TEMPO.CO*, December 19, 2018, <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1157047/kevicepan-yogya-ada-dua-peristiwa-sebelum-pemotongan-nisan-salib/full&view=ok>.

Bambang Muryanto, “‘This is community consensus’: Yogyakarta villagers destroy cross on public cemetery,” *The Jakarta Post*, December 18, 2018, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2018/12/18/this-is-community-consensus-yogyakarta-villagers-destroy-cross-on-public-cemetery.html>.

communal, the cultural, and the world. This is why interspirituality must be considered as a complement to interreligious dialogue in the pluralistic society of Indonesia.

The sustainability of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), as the existence of Indonesia as a people and as a nation, requires Indonesians to live in interspirituality. Interspirituality is not sharing knowledge about God for mutual understanding from various traditions, as interreligious dialogue is, but goes beyond it. Interspirituality is sharing about life, here and now, in the world. If interreligious dialogue is concerned with *the world of religion*, interspirituality is concerned with *the world of the self*. Interspirituality is about sharing the total being and reality of the self as a subject for the capacity of self-transcendence, through the actions of friendship and love within a pluralistic existence. In interspirituality, consciousness takes on an essential role in the self, who grows in “a radical openness to the real.”<sup>1164</sup> This radical openness leads the self to the “vast community of insight and experience available to humanity at all times and in all places. This community embraces the collective wisdom of the human family.”<sup>1165</sup> The self in his or her value of humanity becomes *the meeting point* of all traditions and life contexts. In line with Teasdale, Stephen G. Post says:

Humanity is understood as responding to God in filial love and to one another as universal brothers and sisters. Local boundaries of blood relationship are transcended in the discovery of larger spiritual relationship binding all persons together in one family. The family spirit is made inclusive.<sup>1166</sup>

Interspirituality does not separate divinity from humanity, but rather sees the unity of the divine and humane aspects within the self, personally and communally. For the self, there is

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1164. Teasdale, *Mystic Heart*, 243.

1165. Teasdale, *Monk in the World*, 175.

1166. Stephen G. Post, “The Tradition of Agape,” in *Altruism & Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy, & Religion in Dialogue*, ed. Stephen G. Post, Lynn G. Underwood, Jeffrey P. Schloss, and William B. Hurlbut (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 58.



no fear in embracing the diversity of life, which refers to humanity itself. At that point, then, the self becomes truly interspiritual as a mystic. The heart of interspirituality is mystical consciousness attained through self-transcendence.

As the core of interspirituality, self-transcendence requires the self to become a *subjective presence* through conscious intentionality, and the self has an *unrestricted desire to know*, expressed through inquiry and critical reflection in ordinary life. These aspects acknowledge that self-transcendence is a lifelong process in which the self must engage with reality and the terminal value. The fulfilment of the capacity for self-transcendence is *being in love with God*, during which the self is in love “without limits or qualifications or conditions or reservations.”<sup>1167</sup> Self-transcendence points to the self as a *knower* and a *lover* to achieve human authenticity. The insight of the fulfilment of self-transcendence is radical love as the mystical way of life. This radical love is “not love of God divorced from love of the world.”<sup>1168</sup> Rather, the way to love God is by loving others in this world. This is the way of the holistic incarnate subject, through the interconnectedness of vision, virtue, and vocation. Self-transcendence as mystical consciousness is the prolongation of ordinary consciousness. Mystics are not withdrawn from the world, but rather enter the world passionately and critically, as Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram did.

As mystics, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram understood that God and humans are united instead of separated. Mother Teresa, through her desire of “I thirst,” points to seeing the poorest of the poor as Jesus longing for help. Her *charity* for the poorest of the poor is an expression of her deep, intimate relationship with God. Similarly, Ki Ageng Suryomentaram through his desire to move beyond “*aku durung tahu kepethuk uwong*” (I

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1167. Lonergan, *Method*, 106.

1168. Johnston, *Inner Eye of Love*, 65.

did not see a human being) draws individuals into seeing others as human, not based on status. His *Kawruh Jiwa* within *raos* (intuitive inner feeling) is the way to build a relationship between the self, others, and *guru sejati* as the Javanese representative of divine presence for peaceful living. Both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram demonstrate that self-transcendence begins with a simple act in ordinary life: quenching the thirst of the poorest of the poor and showing compassion to farm laborers in the rice fields, respectively. Because of their radical love, these simple things grow fruitfully as Mother Teresa evokes compassion for the poor in Calcutta and beyond. Ki Ageng Suryomentaram, as well, proposes a transformative communal life through the era of *Windu Kencana* (Harmonious Living): *guyup* (harmony), *tentrem* (tranquility), and *seneng sesarengan* (happiness together). The basis of the mystical ways of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram is not a doctrine, but a lived-experience with(in) society as the way to love because “[m]ysticism wants nothing else but to love life.”<sup>1169</sup> As mystics, both Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram are transformative agents in human history and in *this* world.

Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram together become a model for interspirituality which demonstrates that spirituality is not about “narcissism, fanaticism, or self-aggrandisement,” but is about self-transcendence beyond simple identity.<sup>1170</sup> Self-transcendence as mystical consciousness is a universal ground with an inclusive approach, through a dialectical integration of mystical contemplation and transformative service for humanity. Self-transcendence is *the* fundamental need for Indonesians to sustain *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, and build Indonesia as a nation that lives interspirituality.

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1169. Soelle, *Silent Cry*, 282.

1170. Tacey, *Spirituality Revolution*, 28.

As I mentioned in the Introduction, the focus of the research for this dissertation is to build a theory of interspirituality in the field of theology, particularly spirituality. For future research I recommend creating a praxis model of interspirituality that can be applied to nation building through forum group sharing in social environments, or constructing a module of interspirituality within schools of theology as an enterprise of contextual spirituality in Indonesia as a pluralistic country.

#### A future work

To conclude this study, I propose an implementation of my dissertation, called the *Interspiritual Formation* as the next step for future work. I designed this formation as a network program for the Student Council Executive Board of Yogyakarta. The participants are fourth semester undergraduate students from a variety of universities, disciplines, ethnicities, religions or beliefs, and genders. The program is suggested as an extracurricular program for which participants will receive credits from their universities. All participants live together for a week at a particular communal location, such as a training center or a conference center.

This interspiritual formation is an enterprise concerned with the increasing intolerance in Indonesia and particularly in Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta, as an educational city, should lead in empowering the younger generations as the future of Indonesia, which can be achieved through a formational program of self-transcendence. While participants live in the city of Yogyakarta as students, they will have a chance to learn about the interspirituality of Mother Teresa and Ki Ageng Suryomentaram. Participants will also have the opportunity to learn about one aspect of Indonesian cultural heritage through *Kawruh Jiwa* which, is an essential aspect of sustainability for *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

As a method, the interspiritual formation focuses on the inward and outward journey of each participant as he or she develops the capacity of self-transcendence through the nurturing process of his or her *ecology of the self*: vision, virtue, and vocation. This formation is called:

*Interspiritual Formation on “Self-Transcendence as a Mystical Consciousness.”*

The formation outline:

Day 1<sup>st</sup> – *Pre-Journey* (a half day)

Contents:

- a. Each group of participants defines “*What humanity is*,” based on the diversity of the group members, through creative art, such as drawings, music, dance, etc. This art is a way first to see myself and others, then to create a “*we*” which includes our diversity.
- b. Introduction of the interspiritual formation program
- c. Explanation of *ecology of the self* as a tapestry of self-transcendence
- d. Explanation of the contemplative practice of *tapa ngrame* (to be solitary while doing daily activities)
- e. Each participant chooses a location for his or her own contemplative practice of *tapa ngrame* in the midst of social life, such as in traditional markets, malls, Malioboro as a tourist market street, train stations, rice fields, etc. Participants may have the same choices, but each person will participate and experience *tapa ngrame* personally and individually.

Day 2<sup>nd</sup> – *Vision* (Intellectual Conversion: being attentive to reality of life and understanding humanity)

Contents:

- a. From morning to late afternoon, participants do a contemplative practice of *tapa ngrame* based on their previous choices.
- b. In the *tapa ngrame* practice, each participant strives to become wholly “*Myself as listening.*” Each participant must be a subjective presence and follow the flowing experience by being attentive. Participants can make conversation creatively and spontaneously without becoming trapped in an interviews.
- c. Some basic questions as a guideline of subjective presence:
  - What has struck you?
  - Why has it struck you?
  - Is it related to your understanding of a particular concept or does it remind you of a personal experience?
  - How is it related or how does it remind you?
  - What is inspiring you?
  - How does the inspiration deal with human life?
  - Etc.

Participants will develop reflective and critical questions based on their *tapa ngrame* experiences.

- d. In the evening, participants will divide into smaller groups to share their experiences.

### Day 3<sup>rd</sup> – *Virtue* (Moral Conversion: deepening the horizon to judge terminal values)

Contents:

Exploring Mother Teresa:

- a. Explanation about the time and place contexts of Mother Teresa and her awakening

- b. Her mystical way: Charity is Love as the terminal value
- c. Personal reflection: each participant determines personal terminal value(s) based on his or her vision
- d. Group sharing on their personal reflections
- e. Plenary discussion on the implication of personal values for communal life

#### Day 4<sup>th</sup>

Exploring Ki Ageng Suryomentaram:

- a. Explanation about the time and place contexts of Ki Ageng Suryomentaram and his awakening vision
- b. His mystical way: *Kawruh Jiwa* as the terminal value
- c. Personal reflection: each participant determines personal terminal value(s) based on his or her vision
- d. Group sharing on their personal reflections
- e. Plenary discussion on the implication of personal values for communal life

#### Day 5<sup>th</sup> – *Vocation* (Religious Conversion: deciding to turn toward being in love)

Contents:

- a. Exploring Mother Teresa: Wholehearted Free Service to the Poorest of the Poor
- b. Exploring Ki Ageng Suryomentaram: *Manungsa Tanpa Ciri: Semat, Drajat, lan Kramat* (Pure Being: Without Wealth, Public Recognition, and Power)
- c. Personal reflection: each participant develops his or her terminal value into a concrete action
- d. Group sharing on their personal reflections

- e. Plenary discussion on the building of vocation based on terminal value within the communal context

Day 6<sup>th</sup> – *Self-Transcendence* as the fulfilment of human authenticity

Contents:

- a. Discussion of the participants' experiences of in processing their *ecology of the self*.
- b. Explanation about self-transcendence as the core of interspirituality
- c. Discussion on the correlation of interspirituality and *raos sami* in daily life
- d. Explanation about interspirituality as the foundation for Indonesia as *home* for all its diverse peoples

Day 7<sup>th</sup> – *Post-Journey* (a half day)

Contents:

- a. Exploring the way of sustaining *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* for the existence of Indonesian humanity
- b. Close the program with a luncheon, serving *Tumpeng* (the cone shaped rice is surrounded by various dishes: vegetables, boiled eggs, omelet, chicken, beef, etc.). *Tumpeng* symbolizes the harmony of cosmic life. This is inline with the core of interspirituality which is self-transcendence through the cosmic consciousness. Javanese people often serve *tumpeng* to celebrate joyful life events, such as birthdays, weddings, special gatherings, etc.

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